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CLARISSA;

OR, THE

HISTORY

OF A

YOUNG LADY:

COMPREHENDING

THE MOST IMPORTANT CONCERNS

OF

PRIVATE LIFE:

AND PARTICULARLY SHEWING

THE DISTRESSES THAT MAY ATTEND THE

MISCONDUCT,

BOTH OF

PARENTS AND CHILDREN,

IN RELATION TO MARRIAGE.

IN EIGHT VOLUMES.

VOL. V.

A NEW EDITION.

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THE HISTORY OF CLARISSA HARLOWE.

VOL. V.

LETTER I.

Mr. LOVELACE, *To* JOHN BELFORD, *Esq.*

Thursday Morning, Eight o'clock.

HER chamber-door has not yet been opened. I muſt not expect ſhe will breakfaſt with me. Nor dine with me, I doubt. A little ſilly Soul, what troubles does ſhe make to herſelf by her over-niceneſs!—All I have done to her, would have been looked upon as a *frolick* only, a *romping-bout*, and laughed off by Nine parts in Ten of the Sex accordingly. The more ſhe makes of it, the more painful to herſelf, as well as to me.

Why now, Jack, were it not better, upon *her own* notions, that ſhe ſeemed not *ſo ſenſible* as ſhe will make herſelf to be, if ſhe is *very* angry?

But perhaps I am more afraid than I need. I believe I am. From her *over*-niceneſs ariſes my fear, more than from any extraordinary reaſon for reſent-

ment. Next time, ſhe may count herſelf very happy, if ſhe come off no worſe.

The dear creature was ſo frightened, and ſo fatigued, laſt night, no wonder ſhe lies it out this morning.

I hope ſhe has had more reſt than I have had. Soft and balmy, I hope, have been her ſlumbers, that ſhe may meet me in tolerable temper. All ſweetly bluſhing and confounded—I *know* how ſhe will look!—But why ſhould ſhe, the *ſufferer*, be aſhamed, when I, the *treſpaſſer*, am not?

But cuſtom is a prodigious thing. The women are told how much their bluſhes heighten their graces: They practiſe for them therefore: Bluſhes come as haſtily when they call for them, as their tears: Aye, that's it! While we men, taking bluſhes for a ſign of guilt or ſheepiſhneſs, are equally ſtudious to ſuppreſs them.

* * * * *

By my troth, Jack, I am half as much aſhamed to ſee the women below, as my Fair-one can be to ſee me. I have not yet opened my door, that I may not be obtruded upon by them.

After all, what devils may one make of the Sex! To what a height of—What ſhall I call it?—muſt thoſe of it be arrived, who once loved a man with ſo much diſtinction, as both Polly and Sally loved me; and yet can have got ſo much above the pangs of jealouſy, ſo much above the mortifying reflections that ariſe from dividing and ſharing with new objects the affections of them they prefer to all others, as to wiſh for, and promote a Competitorſhip in his Love, and make their ſupreme delight conſiſt in reducing others to their level!—For thou canſt not imagine, how even Sally Martin rejoiced laſt night in the thought that the Lady's hour was approaching.

Paſt Ten o'clock.

I NEVER longed in my life for any thing with ſo much

much impatience, as to ſee my Charmer. She has been ſtirring, it ſeems, theſe two hours.

Dorcas juſt now tapped at her door, to take her morning commands.

She had none for her, was the anſwer.

She deſired to know, If ſhe would not breakfaſt?

A ſullen and low-voiced *negative* received Dorcas.

I will go myſelf.

* * * * *

THREE different times tapped I at the door; but had no anſwer.

Permit me, deareſt creature, to enquire after your health. As you have not been ſeen to-day, I am impatient to know how you do.

Not a word of anſwer; but a deep ſigh, even to ſobbing.

Let me beg of you, Madam, to accompany me up another pair of ſtairs—You'll rejoice to ſee what a happy eſcape we have all had.

A happy eſcape indeed, Jack!—For the fire had ſcorched the window-board, ſinged the hangings, and burnt through the ſlit-deal lining of the window-jambs.

No anſwer, Madam!—Am I not worthy of one word?—Is it thus you keep your promiſe with me?—Shall I not have the favour of your company for two minutes [Only for two minutes] in the Dining-room?

Hem!—And a deep ſigh!—were all the anſwer.

Anſwer me but how you do! Anſwer me but that you are well! Is this the forgiveneſs that was the condition of my obedience?

Then, in a faintiſh, but angry voice, Begone from my door!—Wretch! inhuman, barbarous, and all that is baſe and treacherous!—begone from my door! Nor teaze thus a poor creature, entitled to protection, not outrage.

I ſee, Madam, how you keep your word with me—

If a ſudden impulſe, the effects of an unthought-of accident, cannot be forgiven—

O the dreadful weight of a Father's curſe, thus in the very Letter of it——

And then her voice dying away in murmurs inarticulate, I looked through the key-hole, and ſaw her on her knees, her face, though not towards me, lifted up, as well as hands, and theſe folded, deprecating, I ſuppoſe, that gloomy tyrant's curſe.

I could not help being moved.

My deareſt Life! admit me to your preſence but for two minutes, and confirm your promiſed pardon; and may lightning blaſt me on the ſpot, if I offer any-thing but my penitence, at a ſhrine ſo ſacred!—I will afterwards leave you for a whole day; and till to-morrow morning; and then attend you with Writings, all ready to ſign, a Licence obtained, or if it cannot, a Miniſter without one. This once believe me! When you ſee the reality of the danger that gave occaſion for this your unhappy reſentment, you will think leſs hardly of me. And let me beſeech you to perform a promiſe on which I made a reliance not altogether ungenerous.

I cannot ſee you! Would to Heaven I never had! If I write, that's all I can do.

Let your writing then, my deareſt Life, confirm your promiſe: And I will withdraw in expectation of it.

Paſt Eleven o'cloek.

She rung her bell for Dorcas; and, with her door in her hand, only half-opened, gave her a billet for me.

How did the dear creature look, Dorcas?

She was dreſſed. She turned her face quite from me; and ſighed, as if her heart would break.

Sweet creature:—I kiſſed the wet wafer, and drew it from the paper with my breath.

Theſe are the contents.—No inſcriptive Sir! No Mr. Lovelace! I

I Cannot ſee you: Nor will I, if I can help it. Words cannot expreſs the anguiſh of my ſoul on your baſeneſs and ingratitude.

If the circumſtances of things are ſuch, that I can have no way for Reconciliation with thoſe who would have been my natural protectors from ſuch outrages, but through *you* [The only inducement I can have to ſtay a moment longer in your knowledge] pen and ink muſt be, at preſent, the only means of communication between us.

Vileſt of men and moſt deteſtable of plotters! how have I deſerved from you the ſhocking indignities—But no more—Only for your own ſake, wiſh not, at leaſt for a week to come, to ſee

The undeſervedly injured and inſulted

CLARILSA HARLOWE.

So thou ſeeſt, nothing could have ſtood me in ſtead, but this plot of Tomlinſon and her uncle! To what a pretty paſs, nevertheleſs, have I brought myſelf! — Had Cæſar been ſuch a fool, he had never paſſed the Rubicon. But after he *had* paſſed it, had he retreated *re infectâ*, intimidated by a ſenatorial Edict, what a pretty figure would he have made in hiſtory!—I might have known, that to attempt a robbery, and put a perſon in bodily fear, is as puniſhable as if the robbery had been actually committed.

But not to ſee her for a week!—Dear, pretty ſoul! how ſhe anticipates me in every thing! The counſellor will have finiſhed the writings to-day or to-morrow, at furtheſt: The Licence with the Parſon, or the Parſon without the Licence, muſt be alſo procured within the next four-and-twenty hours; Pritchard is as good as ready with his Indentures Tripartite: Tomlinſon is at hand with a favourable anſwer from her Uncle—*Yet not to ſee her for a week!*——Dear ſweet ſoul;—Her good angel is gone a journey: Is truanting at leaſt. But nevertheleſs, in thy week's

time, or in much leſs, my Charmer, I doubt not to complete my triumph!

But what vexes me of all things, is, that ſuch an excellent creature ſhould break her word:—Fie, fie, upon her!—But no body is abſolutely perfect! *'Tis human to err, but not to perſevere*—I hope my Charmer cannot be inhuman!

LETTER II.

Mr. LOVELACE, *To* JOHN BELFORD, *Eſq.*

King's-Arms, Pallmall, Thurſday Two o'Clock.

SEveral billets paſſed between us before I went out, by the *Internunciosſhip* of Dorcas: For which reaſon mine are ſuperſcribed by her married name.—She would not open her door to receive them; leſt I ſhould be near it, I ſuppoſe: So Dorcas was forced to put them under the door (after copying them for thee); and thence to take the anſwers. Read them, if thou wilt, at this place.

To Mrs. LOVELACE.

INdeed, my deareſt Life, you carry this matter too far. What will the people below, who ſuppoſe us one as to the Ceremony, think of ſo great a Niceneſs? Liberties ſo innocent! the Occaſion ſo accidental!—You will expoſe *yourſelf* as well as *me*.—Hitherto they know nothing of what has paſſed. And what indeed *has* paſſed, to occaſion all this reſentment?—I am ſure, you will not, by a breach of your word of honour, give me reaſon to conclude that, had I *not* obeyed you, I could have faired no worſe.

Moſt ſincerely do I repent the offence given to your delicacy—But muſt I, for ſo accidental an occurrence, be branded by ſuch ſhocking names?—*Vileſt of men*, and *moſt deteſtable of plotters*, are hard words!—From the pen of ſuch a Lady too.

If

If you ſtep up another pair of ſtairs, you will be convinced, that, however *deteſtable* I may be to you, I am no *plotter* in this affair.

I muſt inſiſt upon ſeeing you, in order to take your directions upon ſome of the ſubjects we talked of yeſterday in the evening.

All that is *more than neceſſary is too much*. I claim your promiſed pardon, und wiſh to plead it on my knees.

I beg your preſence in the Dining-room for one quarter of an hour, and I will then leave you for the day, I am,

My deareſt Life,
Your ever adoring and truly penitent,
LOVELACE.

To Mr. LOVELACE.

I Will not ſee you. I cannot ſee you. I have no directions to give you. Let Providence decide for me as it pleaſes.

The more I reflect upon your vileneſs, your ingrateful, your barbarous vileneſs, the more I am exaſperated againſt you.

You are the *laſt* perſon, whoſe judgment I will take upon what is or is not carried too far in matters of decency.

'Tis grievous to me to write, or even to *think* of you at preſent. Urge me no more then. Once more, I will *not* ſee you. Nor care I, now you have made me vile to myſelf, what other people think of me.

To Mrs. LOVELACE.

AGain, Madam, I remind you of your promiſe: and beg leave to ſay, I inſiſt upon the performance of it.

Remember, deareſt creature, that the fault of a blameable perſon cannot warrant a fault in one more perfect. *Overniceneſs* may be *Underniceneſs!*

I canot reproach myſelf with any thing that deſerves this high reſentment.

I own that the violence of my paſſion for you might have carried me beyond fit bounds—But that your commands and adjurations had power over me at *ſuch* a moment, I humbly preſume to ſay, deſerves ſome conſideration.

You enjoin me not to ſee you for a week. If I have not your pardon before Captain Tomlinſon comes to town, what ſhall I ſay to *him?*

I beg once more your preſence in the Dining room. By my Soul, Madam, I *muſt* ſee you.

I want to conſult you about the Licence, and other particulars of great importance. The people below think us married; and I cannot talk to you upon ſuch ſubjects with the door between us.

For Heaven's ſake, favour me with your preſence for a few minutes: And I will leave you for the day.

If I am to be forgiven, according to your promiſe, the earlier forgiveneſs will be moſt obliging, and will ſave great pain to yourſelf, as well as to

Your truly contrite and afflicted

Lovelace.

To Mr. Lovelace.

THE more you teaſe me, the worſe it will be for you.

Time is wanted to conſider whether I ever ſhould think of you at all.

At *preſent*, it is my ſincere wiſh, that I may never more ſee your face.

All that can afford you the leaſt ſhadow of favour from me, ariſes from the hoped-for Reconciliation with my *real* friends, not my *Judas* protector.

I am careleſs at preſent of conſequences. I hate myſelf: And who is it I have reaſon to value?—Not the man who could form a plot to diſgrace his own hopes, as well as a poor friendleſs creature (*made friend-*

friendleſs by himſelf) by inſults not to be thought of with patience.

Madam, *To Mrs.* LOVELACE.

I Will go to the Commons, and proceed in every particular as if I had not the misfortune to be under your diſpleaſure.

I muſt inſiſt upon it, that however faulty my paſſion on ſo unexpected an incident, made me appear to a Lady of your delicacy, yet my compliance with your entreaties at *ſuch* a moment [As it gave you an inſtance of your power over me, which few men could have ſhewn] ought, duly conſidered, to entitle me to the effects of that ſolemn promiſe which was the condition of my obedience.

I hope to find you in a kinder, and, I will ſay, *juſter* diſpoſition on my return. Whether I get the Licence, or not, let me beg of you to make the *Soon* you have been pleaſed to bid me hope for, to-morrow morning. This will reconcile every thing, and make me the happieſt of men.

The ſettlements are ready to ſign, or will be by night.

For Heaven's ſake, Madam, do not carry your reſentment into a diſpleaſure ſo diſproportionate to the offence. For that would be, to expoſe, us both to the people below; and, what is of infinite more conſequence to us, to Captain Tomlinſon. Let us be able, I beſeech you, Madam, to aſſure him, on his next viſit, that we are one.

As I have no hope to be permitted to dine with you, I ſhall not return till evening: and then, I preſume to ſay, I *expect* [Your *promiſe* authorizes me to uſe the word] to find you diſpoſed to bleſs, by your conſent for to-morrow,

Your adoring,

LOVELACE.

WHAT pleaſure did I propoſe to take, how to *enjoy* the ſweet confuſion in which I expected to find her, while all was ſo recent!—But ſhe *muſt*, ſhe *ſhall*, ſee me on my return. It were better for *herſelf*, as well as for *me*, that ſhe had not made *ſo much ado about nothing*. I muſt keep my Anger alive, leſt it ſink into Compaſſion. *Love* and *Compoſſion*, be the provocation ever ſo great, are hard to be ſeparated: While *Anger* converts what would be *Pity* without it, into *Reſentment*. Nothing can be lovely in a man's eye, with which he is thoroughly diſpleaſed.

I ordered Dorcas, on putting the laſt billet under the door, and finding it taken up, to tell her, that I hoped an anſwer to it before I went out.

Her reply was verbal, *Tell him that I care not whither he goes, nor what he does.—And this*, re-urged by Dorcas, *was all ſhe had to ſay to me.*

I looked through the key hole at my going by her door, and ſaw her on her knees, at her bed's feet, her head and boſom on the bed, her arms extended [*Sweet creature how I adore her!*]; and in an agony ſhe ſeemed to be, ſobbing, as I heard at that diſtance, as if her heart would break—By my Soul, Jack, I am a *pity*-ful fellow. Recollection is my enemy!—Divine Excellence!—Happy with her for ſo many days together! Now ſo unhappy!—And for what?—But ſhe is Purity herſelf. And why, after all, ſhould I thus torment—But I muſt not truſt myſelf with myſelf, in the humour I am in.

* * * * * *

WAITING here for Mowbray and Mallory, by whoſe aid I am to get the Licence, I took papers out of my pocket, to divert myſelf; and thy laſt popt officiouſly the firſt into my hand. I gave it the honour of a re-peruſal; and this revived the ſubject with me, with which I had reſolved not to truſt myſelf.

I remember, that the dear creature, in her torn anſwer to my propoſals, ſays, *That Condeſcenſion is*

not

not Meanneſs. She better knows how to make this out, than any mortal breathing. Condeſcenſion indeed *implies* dignity: And dignity ever *was* there in *her* condeſcenſion. Yet ſuch a dignity, as gave grace to the condeſcenſion; for there was no pride, no inſult, no apparent ſuperiority, indicated by it.—This, Miſs Howe confirms to be a part of her general character (*a*).

I can tell her, how ſhe might behave, to make me her own for ever. She knows ſhe cannot fly me. She knows ſhe muſt ſee me ſooner or later; the ſooner the more gracious.—I would allow her to reſent [Not becauſe the liberties I took with her require reſentment, were ſhe not a CLARISSA; but as it becomes her particular niceneſs to reſent]: But would ſhe ſhew more *Love* than *Abhorrence* of me in her reſentment; would ſhe *ſeem*, if it were *but* to *ſeem*, to believe the fire no device, and all that followed merely accidental; and deſcend, upon it, to tender expoſtulation, and upbraiding for the advantage I would have taken of her ſurprize; and would ſhe, at laſt, be ſatisfied (as *well* ſhe may) that it was attended with no further conſequence; and place ſome generous confidence in my honour [*Power loves to be truſted, Jack*;] I think I would put an end to all her trials, and pay her my vows at the Altar.

Yet, to have taken ſuch bold ſteps, as with Tomlinſon and her Uncle—To have made ſuch a progreſs—O Belford, Belford, how I have puzzled myſelf, as well as her!—This curſed averſion to Wedlock how it has entangled me!—What contradictions has it made me guilty of!

How pleaſing to myſelf, to look back upon the happy days I gave her; though mine would doubtleſs have been more unmixedly ſo, could I have determined to lay aſide my contrivances, and to be as ſincere all the time, as ſhe deſerved that I ſhould be!

(*a*) See Vol. IV. p. 62.

If

If I find this humour hold but till to-morrow morning [And it has now lasted two full hours, and I seem, methinks, to have pleasure in encouraging it] I will make thee a visit, I think, or get thee to come to me; and then will I—*consult thee upon it.*

But she will not trust me. She will not confide in my honour. Doubt, in this case, is Defiance. She loves me not well enough to forgive me generously. *She is so greatly above me!* How can I forgive her for a merit so mortifying to my pride! She *thinks*, she *knows*, she has *told* me, that she is above me. These words are still in my ears, 'Begone, Lovelace!—'My Soul is above thee, man!—Thou hast a proud 'heart to contend with!—My Soul is above thee, 'man (*a*)!' Miss Howe thinks her above me too. Thou, even thou, my friend, my *intimate* friend and companion, art of the same opinion. Then I fear her as much as I love her.—How shall my pride bear these reflections? My Wife (as I have so often said, because it so often recurs to my thoughts) to be so *much* my Superior!—Myself to be considered but as the *second person* in my own family!—Canst thou teach me to bear such a reflexion as this!—To tell me of my acquisition in her, and that she, with all her excellencies, will be *mine* in full property, is a mistake—It cannot be so—For shall I not be *hers*; and not *my own?*—Will not every act of her duty (as I cannot deserve it) be a condescension, and a triumph over me?—And must I owe it merely to her *goodness* that she does not despise me?—To have her *condescend* to bear with my follies!—To wound me with an *Eye of Pity!*—A Daughter of the Harlowes thus to excel the last, and as I have heretofore said, not the meanest of the Lovelaces (*b*)—Forbid it!—

Yet forbid it not—For do I not now—do I not every moment—see her before me all over charms, and elegance and purity, as in the struggles of the past

(*a*) See Vol. IV. Letter xxxv. (*b*) See Vol. iii. p. 79.

midnight?

midnight? And in theſe ſtruggles, heart, voice, eyes, hands, and ſentiments, ſo greatly, ſo glorioufly conſiſtent with the character ſhe has ſuſtained from her cradle to the preſent hour?

But what advantages do I give *thee?*

Yet have I not *always* done her juſtice? Why then thy teazing impertinence?

However, I forgive thee, Jack—Since (ſo much generous love am I capable of!) I had rather all the world ſhould condemn *me*, than that *her* character ſhould ſuffer the leaſt impeachment.

The dear creature herſelf once told me, that there was a ſtrange mixture in my mind (*a*).

I have been called *Devil* and *Beelzebub*, between the two proud Beauties: I muſt indeed be a Beelzebub, if I had not ſome tolerable qualities.

But as Miſs Howe ſays, the *ſuffering time* of this excellent creature is her *ſhining time* (*b*). Hitherto ſhe has done nothing but ſhine.

She called me *villain*, Belford, within theſe few hours. And what is the ſum of the preſent argument; but that had I *not* been a villain in her ſenſe of the word, ſhe had not been ſo much an *angel?*

O Jack, Jack! This midnight attempt has made me mad; has utterly undone me! How can the dear creature ſay, I have made her vile in her *own* eyes, when her behaviour under ſuch a ſurprize, and her reſentment under ſuch circumſtances, have ſo greatly exalted her in *mine?*

Whence, however, this ſtrange rhapſody?—Is it owing to my being *here?* That I am not at *Sinclair*'s? But if there be infection in that houſe, how has my *Beloved* eſcaped it?

But no more in this ſtrain!—I will ſee what her behaviour will be on my return—Yet already do I begin to apprehend ſome little ſinkings, ſome little retrogradations: For I have juſt now a doubt ariſen,

(*a*) Vol. III. Letter xxix. (*b*) See Vol. IV. p. 64.

whether, for *her own* ſake, I ſhould wiſh her to forgive me *lightly*, or with *difficulty*?

* * * * * *

I AM in a way to come at the wiſhed-for Licence.

I have now given every thing between my Beloved and me a full conſideration; and my puzzle is over. What has brought me to a ſpeedier determination, is, that I think I have found out what ſhe means by the *week*'s diſtance at which ſhe intends to hold me. It is, that ſhe may have time to write to Miſs Howe, to put in motion that curſed ſcheme of hers, and to take meaſures upon it which ſhall enable her to abandon and renounce me for ever. Now, Jack, *if I obtain not admiſſion to her preſence on my return*; but am refuſed with haughtineſs; if her *week* be inſiſted upon (ſuch proſpects before her); I ſhall be confirmed in my conjecture; and it will be plain to me, that weak at beſt was that Love, which could give place to punctilio, at a time when the all-reconciling Ceremony, as ſhe muſt think, waits her command:—Then will I recollect all her perverſeneſſes; then will I re-peruſe Miſs Howe's Letters, and the tranſcripts from others of them; give way to my averſion to the Life of Shackles: And then ſhall ſhe be mine in my own way.

But, after all, I am in hopes, that ſhe will have better conſidered of every thing by the evening; that her threat of a *week*'s diſtance was thrown out in the heat of paſſion; and that ſhe will allow, that I have as much cauſe to quarrel with *her* for breach of her word, as ſhe has with *me* for breach of the peace.

Theſe lines of Rowe have got into my head; and I ſhall repeat them very devoutly all the way the chairmen ſhall poppet me towards her by-and-by.

Teach me, ſome power, the happy art of ſpeech,
To dreſs my purpoſe up in gracious words;
Such as may ſoftly ſteal upon her ſoul,
And never waken the temperſtuous paſſions.

LET-

LETTER III.

Mr. LOVELACE, *To* JOHN BELFORD, *Esq.*

Thursday Evening, June 8.

O *For a Curse to kill with!*—Ruined! Undone! Outwitted! Tricked!—Zounds, man, the Lady is gone off!—Absolutely gone off! Escaped!—

Thou knowest not, nor canst conceive, the pangs that wring my heart!—What can I do!—O Lord, O Lord, O Lord!

And thou, too, who hast endeavoured to weaken my hands, wilt but clap thy dragon's wings at the tidings!

Yet I must write, or I shall go distracted. Little less have I been these two hours; dispatching messengers to every Stage, to every Inn, to every Waggon or Coach, whether flying or creeping, and to every house with a Bill up, for five miles round.

The little hypocrite, who knows not a soul in this town [*I thought I was sure of her at any time*] such an unexperienced traitress; giving me hope too, in her first billet, that her expectation of the family-reconciliation would with-hold her from taking such a step as this — Curse upon her contrivances!—I thought, that it was owing to her bashfulness, to her modesty, that, after a few innocent freedoms, she could not look me in the face; when, all the while, she was impudently [Yes, I say, *impudently*, though she be Clarissa Harlowe] contriving to rob me of the dearest property I had ever purchased—Purchased by a painful servitude of many months; fighting through the Wild-beasts of her family for her, and combating with a Wind-mill Virtue, which hath cost me millions of perjuries only to attempt; and which now, with its damn'd Air-fans, has tost me a mile and an half beyond hope!—And this, just as I had arrived within view of the consummation of all my wishes!

O Devil

O Devil of Love! God of Love no more—How have I deſerved this of thee!—Never before the friend of frozen virtue?—*Powerleſs* demon, for powerleſs thou muſt be, if thou *meanedſt* not to fruſtrate my hopes; who ſhall henceforth kneel at thy altars!—May every enterpriſing heart abhor, deſpiſe, execrate, renounce thee, as I do!—But, O Belford, Belford, what ſignifies curſing now!

* * * * *

How ſhe could effect this her wicked eſcape, is my aſtoniſhment; the whole Siſterhood having charge of her:—For, as yet, I have not had patience enough to enquire into the particulars, nor to let a ſoul of them approach me.

Of this I am ſure, *or I had not brought her hither*; there is not a creature belonging to this houſe, that could be *corrupted* either by *Virtue* or *Remorſe*: The higheſt joy every infernal Nymph of this worſe than infernal habitation, *could* have known, would have been to reduce this proud Beauty to her own level.—And as to my villain, who alſo had charge of her, he is ſuch a ſeaſoned varlet, that he delights in miſchief for the ſake of it: No bribe could ſeduce him to betray his truſt, were there but wickedneſs in it!—'Tis well, however, he was out of my way when the curſed news was imparted to me!—Gone, the villain! in queſt of her: Not to return, nor to ſee my face [ſo it ſeems he declared] till he has heard ſome tidings of her; and all the *out-of-place* varlets of his numerous acquaintance are ſummoned and employed in the ſame buſineſs.

To what purpoſe brought I this angel (angel I muſt yet call her) to this helliſh houſe?—And was I not meditating to do her deſerved honour? By my Soul, Belford, I was reſolved—But thou knoweſt what I had *conditionally* reſolved—And now, who can tell into what hands ſhe may have fallen!

I am mad, ſtark mad, by Jupiter, at the thoughts

of

of this!—Unprovided, deſtitute, unacquainted—ſome villain, worſe than myſelf, who adores her not as I adore her, may have ſeized her, and taken advantage of her diſtreſs!—Let me periſh, Belford, if a whole hecatomb of *innocents*, as the little plagues are called, ſhall atone for the broken promiſe and wicked artifices of this *cruel creature!*

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* * *

GOING home, as I did, with reſolutions favourable to her, judge thou of my diiſtraction, when her eſcape was firſt hinted to me, although but in broken ſentences. I knew not what I ſaid, nor what I did. I wanted to kill ſomebody. I flew out of one room into another, while all avoided me but the veteran Betty Carberry, who broke the matter to me. I charged bribery and corruption, in my firſt fury, upon all; and threatened deſtruction to old and young, as they ſhould come in my way.

Dorcas continues *locked up* from me: Sally and Polly have not yet dared to appear: The vile Sinclair——

But here come the odious devil. She taps at the door, though that's only a-jar, whining and ſnuffling, to try, I ſuppoſe, to coax me into temper.

* * * *
* * *

WHAT a helpleſs ſtate, where a man can only execrate himſelf and others; the occaſion of his rage remaining; the evil encreaſing upon reflection; time itſelf conſpiring to deepen it!—O how I curs'd her!

I have her now, methinks, before me, blubbering—How odious does ſorrow make an ugly face!—Thine, Jack, and this old beldam's, in penitentials, inſtead of moving compaſſion, muſt evermore confirm hatred; while Beauty in tears, is beauty heightened, and what my heart has ever delighted to ſee.——

'What excuſe!—Confound you, and your curſed 'Daughters, what excuſe can you make?—Is ſhe 'not gone!—Has ſhe not eſcaped!—But before I

'am

'am quite diſtracted, before I commit half an hun-
'dred murders, let me hear how it was.'——

* * * *
* *

I HAVE heard her ſtory!—Art, damn'd, confounded, wicked, unpardonable Art, in a woman of her character—But ſhew me a woman, and I'll ſhew thee a plotter!—This plaguy Sex is *Art* itſelf: Every individual of it is a plotter by nature.

This is the ſubſtance of the old wretch's account.

She told me, 'That I had no ſooner left the vile 'houſe, than Dorcas acquainted the Syren' [*Do, Jack, let me call her names!—I beſeech thee, Jack, to permit me to call her names!*] 'than Dorcas ac-'quainted her Lady with it; and that I had left word, 'that I was gone to Doctors-Commons, and ſhould 'be heard of for ſome hours at the Horn there, if 'enquired after by the Counſellor, or any-body elſe: 'That afterwards I ſhould be either at the Cocoa-'Tree, or King's-Arms, and ſhould not return till 'late. She then urged her to take ſome refreſhment.

'She was in tears when Dorcas approached her; 'her ſaucy eyes ſwelled with weeping: She refuſed 'either to eat or drink; ſighed as if her heart would 'break.'—Falſe, deviliſh grief! *not the humble, ſilent, grief, that only deſerves pity!*—Contriving to ruin me, to deſpoil me of all that I held valuable, in the very midſt of it.

'Nevertheleſs, being reſolved not to ſee me for a 'week at leaſt, ſhe ordered her to bring up three 'or four French rolls, with a little butter, and a de-'canter of water; telling her, ſhe would diſpenſe with 'her attendance; and that ſhould be all ſhe would 'live upon in the interim. So artful creature! pre-'tending to lay up for a week's ſiege.'—For, as to ſubſtantial food, ſhe, no more than other angels—Angles, ſaid I—The devil take me if ſhe ſhall be any more an angel!—For ſhe is odious in my eyes; and I hate her mortally!——

But

But oh! Lovelace, thou lyeſt!—She is all that is lovely! All that is excellent!

But *is* ſhe, *can* ſhe be gone!—O how Miſs Howe will triumph!—But if that little Fury receive her, Fate ſhall make me rich amends; for then will I contrive to have them both.

I was looking back for connexion—but the devil take connexion; I have no buſineſs with it: The contrary beſt befits diſtraction, and that will ſoon be my lot!

'Dorcas conſulted the old wretch about obeying 'her: O yes, by all means; for Mr. Lovelace knew 'how to come at her at any time: and directed a 'bottle of Sherry to be added.

'This chearful compliance ſo obliged her, that ſhe 'was prevailed upon to go up, and look at the da-'mage done by the fire; and ſeemed not only ſhocked 'at it, but, as they thought, ſatisfied it was no trick; 'as ſhe owned ſhe had at firſt apprehended it to be. 'All this made them ſecure; and they laughed in 'their ſleeves, to think what a childiſh way of ſhew-'ing her reſentment ſhe had found out; Sally throw-'ing out her witticiſms, that Mrs. Lovelace was 'right, however, *not to quarrel with her bread and 'butter.*'

Now this very childiſhneſs, as *they* imagined it, in ſuch a genius, would have made *me* ſuſpect either her head, after what had happened the night before; or her purpoſe, when the marriage was (ſo far as ſhe knew) to be completed within the week in which ſhe was reſolved to ſecrete herſelf from me in the ſame houſe.

'She ſent Will. with a Letter to Wilſon's, directed 'to Miſs Howe, ordering him to enquire if there 'were not one for her there.

'He only pretended to go, and brought word there 'was none; and put her letter in his pocket for me.

'She then ordered him to carry another (which ſhe

'gave

'gave him) to the Horn-Tavern to me.—All this 'done without any ſeeming hurry: yet ſhe appeared 'to be very ſolemn; and put her handkerchief fre-'quently to her eyes.

'Will. pretended to come to me, with this Letter. 'But tho' the dog had the ſagacity to miſtruſt ſome-'thing on her ſending him out a ſecond time (and to '*me*, whom ſhe had refuſed to ſee); which he thought 'extraordinary; and mention his miſtruſts to Sally, 'Polly, and Dorcas; yet they made light of his ſuſ-'picions; Dorcas aſſuring them all, that her Lady 'ſeemed more ſtupid with her grief, than active; 'and that ſhe really believed ſhe was a little turned 'in her head, and knew not what ſhe did. But all 'of them depended upon her inexperience, her open 'temper, and upon her not making the leaſt motion 'towards going out, or to have a coach or chair 'called, as ſometimes ſhe had done; and ſtill more 'upon the preparations ſhe had made for a week's 'ſiege, as I may call it.

'Will. went out, pretending to bring the Letter 'to me; but quickly returned; his heart ſtill miſ-'giving him, on recollecting my frequent cautions, 'that he was not to judge for himſelf, when he had '*poſitive* orders; but if any doubt occurred, from 'circumſtances I could not foreſee, literally to follow 'them, as the only way to avoid blame.

'But it muſt have been in this little interval, that 'ſhe eſcaped; for ſoon after his return, they made 'faſt the ſtreet-door and hatch, the mother and the 'two nymphs taking a little turn into the garden; 'Dorcas going up ſtairs, and Will. (to avoid being 'ſeen by his Lady, or his voice heard) down into the 'kitchen.

'About half an hour after, Dorcas, who had planted 'herſelf where ſhe could ſee her Lady's door open, 'had the curioſity to go to look through the keyhole, 'having a miſgiving, as ſhe ſaid, that her Lady might

'offer

'offer ſome violence to herſelf, in the mood ſhe had
'been in all day; and finding the key in the door,
'which was not very uſual, ſhe tapped at it three or
'four times, and having no anſwer, opened it, with
'Madam, Madam, did you call?—Suppoſing her in
'her cloſet.

'Having no anſwer, ſhe ſtept forward, and was
'aſtoniſhed to find ſhe was not there. She haſtily
'ran into the Dining-room, then into my apartments;
'ſearched every cloſet; dreading all the time to be-
'hold ſome ſad cataſtrophe.

'Not finding her any where, ſhe ran down to the
'old creature, and her nymphs, with a Have you
'ſeen my Lady?—Then ſhe's gone!—She's nowhere
'above!

'They were ſure ſhe could not be gone out.

'The whole houſe was in an uproar in an inſtant;
'ſome running up-ſtairs, ſome down, from the upper
'rooms to the lower; and all ſcreaming, How ſhould
'they look *me* in the face!

'Will. cried out, he was a dead man: *He* blamed
'*them*; *They him*; and every one was an *accuſer*, and
'an *excuſer*, at the ſame time.

'When they had ſearched the whole houſe, and
'every cloſet in it, ten times over, to no purpoſe,
'they took it into their heads to ſend to all the por-
'ters, chairmen, and hackney-coachmen, that had
'been near the houſe for two hours paſt to enquire
'if any of them ſaw Such a young Lady; deſcribing
'her.

'This brought them ſome light: The only dawn-
'ing for hope, that I can have, and which keeps me
'from abſolute deſpair. One of the chairmen gave
'them this account: That he ſaw ſuch a one come
'out of the houſe a little before Four (in a great
'hurry, and as if frighted) with a little parcel tied
'up in an handkerchief, in her hand: That he took
'notice to his fellow, who plied her without her

'anſwer-

'answering, that she was a fine young Lady: That 'he'd warrant, she had either a bad husband, or very 'cross parents; for that her eyes seemed swelled 'with crying. Upon which, a third fellow replied, 'That it might be a Doe escaped from Mother '*Damnable's* park. This Mrs. Sinclair told me with 'a curse, and a wish that she knew the saucy villain: '—She thought, truly, that she *had a better reputa-* '*tion; so handsomely as she lived, and so justly as she* '*paid every body for what she bought; her house visited* '*by the best and civilest of gentlemen; and no noise or* '*brawls ever heard, or known in it.*

'From these appearances, the fellow who gave 'this information, had the curiosity to follow her, 'unperceived. She often looked back. Every body 'who passed her, turned to look after her; passing 'their verdict upon her tears, her hurry, and her 'charming person; till coming to a stand of coaches, 'a coachman plied her; was accepted; alighted; 'opened the coach door in a hurry, seeing *her* hurry; 'and in it she stumbled for haste; and, as the fellow 'believed, hurt her shin with the stumble.'

The devil take me, Belford, if my generous heart is not moved for her, notwithstanding her wicked deceit, to think what must be her reflections and apprehensions at the time:—A mind so delicate, heeding no censures; yet, probably afraid of being laid hold of by a Lovelace in every one she saw! At the same time, not knowing to what dangers she was about to expose herself; nor of whom she could obtain shelter; a stranger to the town, and to all its ways; the afternoon far gone: but little money; and no cloaths but those she had on!

It is impossible, in this little interval since last night, that Miss How's Townsend could be co-operating.

But how she must abhor me, to run all these risques; how heartily must she detest me, for my freedoms of last night! O that I had given her greater

reason

reaſon for a reſentment ſo violent!—As to her *Virtue*, I am too much enraged to give her the merit due to that. To Virtue it cannot be owing that ſhe ſhould fly from the charming proſpects that were before her; but to Malice, Hatred, Contempt, Harlowe Pride, (the worſt of Pride) and to all the deadly paſſions that ever reigned in a female breaſt—And if I can but recover her—But be ſtill, be calm, be huſhed, my ſtormy paſſions; for is it not Clariſſa [*Harlowe* muſt I ſay?] that thus I rave againſt?

'The fellow heard her ſay, Drive faſt! Very faſt! 'Where, Madam? To Holborn Bars, anſwered 'ſhe; repeating, Drive very faſt!—And up ſhe 'pulled both the windows: And he loſt ſight of the 'coach in a minute.

'Will, as ſoon as he had this intelligence, ſpeeded 'away in hopes to traee her out; declaring, that he 'would never think of ſeeing me, till he had heard 'ſome tidings of his Lady.'

And now, Belford, all my hope is, that this fellow (who attended us in our Airing to Hamſtead, to Highgate, to Muſwell-hill, to Kentiſh-Town) will hear of her at ſome one or other of thoſe places. And on this I the rather build, as I remember ſhe was once, after our return, very inquiſitive about the Stages, and their prices; praiſing the conveniency to paſſengers in their going off every hour; and this in Will's hearing, who was then in attendance. Woe be to the Villain, if he recollect not this!

* * * * * *

I HAVE been traverſing her room, meditating, or taking up every thing ſhe but touched or uſed: The glaſs ſhe dreſſed at, I was ready to break, for not giving me the perſonal image it was wont to reflect, of *her*, whoſe idea is for ever preſent with me. I call for her, now in the tendereſt, now in the moſt reproachful terms, as if within hearing: Wanting *her*, I want my own ſoul, at leaſt every thing dear to

it. What a void in my heart! what a chilneſs in my blood, as if its circulation were arreſted! From her room to my own; in the Dining-room, and in and out of every place where I have ſeen the Beloved of my heart, do I hurry; in none can I tarry; her lovely image in every one, in ſome lively attitude, ruſhing cruelly upon me, in differently remembered converſations.

But when in my firſt fury, at my return, I went up two pair of ſtairs, reſolved to find the locked up Dorcas, and beheld the vainly-burnt window-board, and recollected my baffled contrivances, baffled by my own weak folly, I thought my diſtraction completed; and down I ran as one frighted at a ſpectre, ready to howl for vexation; my head and my temples ſhooting with a violence I had never felt before; and my back aching as if the vertebræ were disjointed, and falling in pieces.

But now that I have heard the Mother's ſtory, and contemplated the dawning hopes given by the chairman's information, I am a good deal eaſier, and can make cooler reflections. Moſt heartily pray I for Will's ſucceſs, every four or five minutes. If I loſe her, all my rage will return with redoubled fury. The diſgrace to be thus outwitted by a novice, an infant in ſtratagem and contrivance, added to the violence of my paſſion for her, will either break my heart, or (what ſaves many an heart, in evils inſupportable) turn my brain. What had I to do to go out a Licence hunting, at leaſt till I had ſeen her, and made up matters with her? And indeed, were it not the privilege of a principal to lay all his own faults upon his underlings, and never be to blame himſelf, I ſhould be apt to reflect, that I am more in fault than any body. And as the ſting of this reflection will ſharpen upon me, if I recover her not, how ſhall I be able to bear it?

If ever—

Here

Here Mr. Lovelace lays himself under a curse, too shocking to be repeated, if he revenge not himself upon the Lady, should be once more get her into his hands.

* * * * * *

I HAVE just now dismissed the sniveling toad Dorcas, who was introduced to me for my pardon by the whining Mother. I gave her a kind of negative and ungracious forgiveness. Yet I shall as violently curse the two nymphs, by-and-by, for the consequences of my own folly: And this will be a good way too, to prevent their ridicule upon me, for losing so glorious an opportunity as I had last night, or rather this morning.

I have collected, from the result of the enquiries made of the chairman, and from Dorcas's observations before the cruel creature escaped, a description of her dress; and am resolved, if I cannot otherwise hear of her, to advertise her in the Gazette, as an eloped wife, both by her maiden and acknowledged name; for her elopement will soon be known by every *Enemy:* Why then should not my *Friends* be made acquainted with it, from whose enquiries and informations I may expect some tidings of her?

'She had on a brown lustring night-gown, fresh,
'and looking like new, as every thing she wears does,
'whether new or not, from an elegance natural to
'her. A beaver hat, a black ribband about her neck,
'and blue knots on her breast. A quilted petticoat
'of carnation-coloured satten; a rose diamond ring,
'supposed on her finger; and in her whole person
'and appearance, as I shall express it, a dignity, as
'well as beauty, that commands the repeated atten-
'tion of every one who sees her.'

The description of her person I shall take a little more pains about. My mind must be more at ease, before I can undertake that. And I shall threaten,

'that if, after a certain period given for her voluntary
'return, ſhe be not heard of, I will proſecute any
'perſon who preſumes to entertain, harbour, abett,
'or encourage her, with all the vengeance that an
'injured gentleman and huſband may be warranted
'to take by Law, or otherwiſe.'

* * * *
* *

Fresh cauſe of aggravation!—But for this ſcribling vein, or I ſhould ſtill run mad.

Again going into her chamber, becauſe it *was* hers, and ſighing over the bed, and every piece of furniture in it, I caſt my eye towards the drawers of the dreſſing-glaſs, and ſaw peep out, as it were, in one of the half-drawn drawers, the corner of a Letter. I ſnatched it out, and found it ſuperſcribed, by her, *To Mr. Lovelace.* The ſight of it made my heart leap, and I trembled ſo, that I could hardly open the ſeal.

How does this damn'd Love unman me!—but nobody ever loved as I love!—It is even encreaſed by her unworthy flight, and my diſappointment. Ingrateful creature, to fly from a paſſion thus ardently flaming! which, like the palm, riſes the more for being depreſſed and ſlighted.

I will not give thee a Copy of this Letter. I owe her not ſo much ſervice.

But wouldſt thou think, that this *haughty promiſe-breaker* could reſolve as ſhe does, abſolutely and for ever to renounce me for what paſſed laſt night? That ſhe could reſolve to forego all her opening proſpects of reconciliation; that Reconciliation with a worthleſs family, on which ſhe had ſet her whole heart?—Yet ſhe does—She acquits me of all obligation to her, and herſelf of all expectations from me—And for what?—O that indeed I had given her real cauſe! Damn'd confounded Niceneſs, Prudery, Affectation, or pretty Ignorance, if not Affectation!—By my ſoul, Belford, I told thee all—I was more indebted to her ſtruggles, than to my own forwardneſs. I cannot

ſupport my own reflections upon a decency ſo ill-requited.—She could not, ſhe would not have been ſo much a Harlowe in her reſentment, had I deſerved, as I *ought* to have done, her reſentment. All ſhe feared, had then been over; and her own good ſenſe, and even modeſty, would have taught her to make the beſt of it.

But if ever again I get her into my hands, *Art* and more *Art*, and *Compulſion* too, if ſhe make it neceſſary [*and 'tis plain that nothing elſe will do*] ſhall ſhe experience from the man whoſe fear *of* her has been above even his paſſion *for* her; and whoſe gentleneſs and forbearance ſhe has thus *perfidiouſly* triumphed over. Well, ſays the Poet,

'Tis nobler like a lion to invade
When appetite directs, and ſeize my prey,
Than to wait tamely, like a begging dog,
Till dull conſent throws out the Scraps of Love.

Thou knoweſt what I have ſo lately vowed—And yet, at times [Cruel creature, and ingrateful as cruel!] I can ſubſcribe with too much truth to thoſe lines of another Poet:

She reigns more fully in my ſoul than ever;
She garriſons my breaſt, and mans againſt me
Ev'n my own rebel thoughts, with thouſand graces,
Ten thouſand charms, and new-diſcovered beauties!

LETTER IV.

Mr. LOVELACE, *To* JOHN BELFORD, *Eſq.*

A Letter is put into my hands by Wilſon himſelf—Such a Letter!

A Letter from Miſs Howe to her cruel friend!—

I made no ſcruple to open it.

It is a miracle that I fell not into fits at the reading of it; and at the thought of what *might* have been the conſequence, had it come to the hands of *this*

Clariſſa Harlowe. Let my juſtly excited rage excuſe my irreverence.

Collins, though not his day, brought it this afternoon to Wilſon's, with a particular deſire, that it might be ſent with all ſpeed to Miſs Beaumont's lodgings, and given, if poſſible, into her own hands. He had before been here (at Mrs. Sinclair's) with intent to deliver it to the Lady with his own hand; but was told [*too truly told!*] that ſhe was abroad; but that they would give her any thing he ſhould leave for her, the moment ſhe returned. But he cared not to truſt them with his buſineſs, and went away to Wilſon's (as I find by the deſcription of him at both places, and there left the Letter; but not till he had a ſecond time called here, and found her not come in.

The Letter [Which I ſhall incloſe; for it is too long to tranſcribe] will account to thee for *Collins*'s coming hither.

O this deviliſh Miſs Howe;—Something muſt be reſolved upon and done with that little Fury!

* * * * * *

Thou wilt ſee the margin of this curſed Letter crouded with indices [☞]. I put them to mark the places which call for vengeance upon the vixen writer, or which require animadverſion. Return thou it to me the moment thou haſt peruſed it.

Read it here; and avoid trembling for me, if thou canſt.

To Miſs Lætitia Beaumont.

My deareſt Friend, *Wedneſday, June 7.*

YOU will perhaps think, that I have been too long ſilent. But I had begun two Letters at different times ſince my laſt, and written a great deal each time; and with ſpirit enough, I aſſure you; ☞ incenſed as I was againſt the abominable wretch you are with; particularly on reading yours of the 21ſt of the paſt month (*a*).

(*a*) See Vol. IV. Letter xxxiv.

☞ The *first* I intended to keep open till I could give you ſome account of my proceedings with Mrs. Townſend. It was ſome days before I ſaw her: And this intervenient ſpace giving me time to peruſe what I had written, I thought it proper to lay that aſide, and to write in a ſtyle a little leſs fer-
☞ vent; for you would have blamed me, I know, for
☞ the freedom of ſome of my expreſſions [*Execrations*, if you pleaſe] And when I had gone a good way in the *ſecond*, the change in your proſpects, on his communicating to you Miſs Montague's Letter, and his better behaviour, occaſioning a change in your mind, I laid that aſide alſo. And in this uncertainty, thought I would wait to ſee the iſſue of affairs between you before I wrote again; believing that all would ſoon be decided one way or other.

I had ſtill, perhaps, held this reſolution [As every appearance, according to your Letters, was more and more promiſing] had not the two paſſed days furniſhed me with intelligence which it highly imports you to know.

But I muſt ſtop here, and take a little walk, to try to keep down that juſt indignation which riſes to my pen, when I am about to relate to you what I muſt communicate.

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I AM not my own miſtreſs enough—Then my Mother—Always up and down—And watching as if I were writing to a Fellow—But I will try if I can contain myſelf in tolerable bounds→

The women of the houſe where you are—O my dear—The women of the houſe—But you never thought highly of them—So it cannot be very ſurpriſing—Nor would you have *ſtaid ſo long with*
☞ *them, had not the notion of removing to one of your own*, made you leſs uneaſy, and leſs curious about their characters, and behaviour. Yet I could *now* wiſh, that you had been leſs reſerved among them—

☞ But I teaze you—In ſhort, my dear, you are certainly in a deviliſh houſe!—Be aſſured, that the woman is one of the vileſt of women—Nor does ſhe go to you by her right name—Very true!—Her name is *not* Sinclair—nor is the Street ſhe lives in, Dover-ſtreet—Did you never go out by yourſelf, and diſcharge the coach or chair, and return by another coach or chair? If you did [Yet I don't remember that you ever wrote to me, that you did] you would never have found your way to the vile houſe, either by the Woman's name, *Sinclair*, or by the Street's name, mentioned by that Doleman in his Letter about the lodgings (*a*).

The wretch might indeed have held out theſe falſe lights a little more excuſeably, had the houſe been an honeſt houſe; and had his end only been to prevent miſchief from your Brother.—But this contrivance was antecedent, as I think, to your Brother's project: So that no excuſe can be made for his intentions at the *time*—The man, whatever he may *now* intend, was certainly then, even *then*, a villain in his heart!

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☞ I AM exceſſively concerned, that I ſhould be prevailed upon, between *your* over-niceneſs, on one hand, and my *Mother*'s poſitiveneſs, on the other, to be ſatisfied without knowing how to direct to you at your lodgings. I think too, that the propoſal that I ſhould be put off to a *third-hand* knowledge, or rather veiled in a *firſt-hand* ignorance, came from him—and that it was only acquieſced in by you, as it was by me (*b*), upon needleſs and weak conſidera-

(*a*) Vol. III. Letters xxxiv, xxxv.

(*b*) See Vol. III. Letter lii. Par. 12. and Letter liv. Par. 12. Where the Reader will obſerve, that the propoſal came from herſelf; which, as it was alſo mentioned by Mr. Lovelace (towards the end of Letter lix. in Vol. III.) ſhe may be preſumed to have forgotten. So that Clariſſa had a double inducement for acquieſcing with the propoſed method of carrying on the correſpondence between Miſs Howe and herſelf by Wilſon's conveyance, and by the name of Lætitia Beaumont.

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tions—Becauſe, truly, I might have it to ſay, if challenged, *that I knew not where to ſend to you!*—I am aſhamed of myſelf!—Had this been at *firſt* excuſeable, it could not be a good reaſon for going on in the folly, when you had no liking to the houſe, and when he began to play tricks, and delay with you.—What! I was to miſtruſt myſelf, was I?—I was to allow it to be thought, that I could not keep my own Secret?--But the houſe *to be taken at this time, and at that time*, led us both on—like fools, like tame fools, in a ſtring.—Upon my life, my dear, this man is a vile, a contemptible villain—I muſt ſpeak out!—How has he laughed in his ſleeve at us both, I warrant, for I can't tell how long!

And yet who could have thought, that a man of fortune, and ſome *reputation* [This Doleman, I mean; not your wretch, to be ſure!]—formerly a Rake indeed—[I enquired after him—long ago; and ſo was the eaſier ſatisfied]—but married to a woman of family—having had a palſy-blow—and one would think a penitent—ſhould recommend ſuch a houſe [Why, my dear, he could not *enquire* of it, but muſt find it to be bad] to ſuch a man as Lovelace, to bring his future, nay, his *then* ſuppoſed, Bride to?

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I WRITE, perhaps, with too much violence, to be clear. But I cannot help it. Yet I lay down my pen, and take it up every ten minutes, in order to write with ſome temper—My Mother too in and out—What need I (ſhe aſks me) lock myſelf in, if I am only reading paſt correſpondencies?—for that is my pretence, when ſhe comes poking in with her face ſharpened to an edge, as I may ſay, by a curioſity that gives her more pain than pleaſure—The Lord forgive me; but I believe I ſhall huff her next time ſhe comes in.

Do *You* forgive me too, my dear. My Mother *ought*; becauſe ſhe ſays, I am my Father's girl; and becauſe I am ſure I am *hers*. I don't know what to do—I don't know what to write next—I have ſo much to write, yet have ſo little patience, and ſo little opportunity.

But I will tell you how I came by my intelligence. ☞*That* being a *fact*, and requiring the leſs attention, I will try to account to you for *that*.

Thus then it came about—'Miſs Lardner (whom 'you have ſeen at her Couſin Biddulph's) ſaw you 'at St. James's church on Sunday was fortnight. 'She kept you in her eye during the whole time; 'but could not once obtain the notice of yours, 'though ſhe courtſied to you twice. She thought to 'pay her compliments to you when the Service was 'over; for ſhe doubted not but you were married— ☞'and for an odd reaſon—*Becauſe you came to church 'by yourſelf*. Every eye (as uſual, wherever you 'are, ſhe ſaid) was upon you; and this ſeeming to 'give you hurry, and you being nearer the door 'than ſhe, you ſlid out, before ſhe could get to you. 'But ſhe ordered her ſervant to follow you till you 'were houſed. This ſervant ſaw you ſtep into a 'chair, which waited for you; and you ordered the 'men to carry you to the place where they took 'you up.

'The next day, Miſs Lardner ſent the ſame ſer-'vant, out of mere curioſity, to make private en-'quiry whether Mr. Lovelace were, or were not, 'with you there. And this enquiry brought out, ☞'from *different* people, that the houſe was ſuſpected 'to be one of thoſe genteel wicked houſes, which 'receive and accommodate *faſhionable people* of 'both Sexes.

'Miſs Lardner, confounded at this ſtrange in-'telligence, made further enquiry; enjoining ſe-

'crecy to the ſervant ſhe had ſent, as well as to the
'gentleman whom ſhe employed: Who had it
☞ 'confirmed from a rakiſh friend, who knew the
'houſe; and told him, that there were two houſes;
'the one *in which all decent appearances were pre-*
'*ſerved, and gueſts rarely admitted*; the other, the
'receptacle of thoſe who were abſolutely engaged,
'and broken to the vile yoke.'

☞ Say—my dear creature—ſay—Shall I not execrate the wretch?—But words are weak—What can I ſay, that will ſuitably expreſs my abhorrence of ſuch a villain as he muſt have been, when he meditated to carry a Clariſſa to ſuch a place!

'Miſs Lardner kept this to herſelf ſome days,
'not knowing what to do; for ſhe loves you, and
'admires you of all women. At laſt, ſhe revealed
'it, but in confidence, to Miſs Biddulph, by Let-
'ter. Miſs Biddulph, in like confidence, being
'afraid it would diſtract *me*, were I to know it,
'communicated it to Miſs Lloyd; and ſo, like a
'whiſpered ſcandal, it paſſed through ſeveral ca-
'nals; and then it came to me. Which was not
'till laſt Monday.'

I thought I ſhould have fainted upon the ſupriſeing communication. But Rage taking place, it blew away the ſudden illneſs. I beſought Miſs Lloyd to re-enjoin ſecrecy to every-one. I told her, that I would not for the world that my Mother, or any
☞ of your family, ſhould know it. And I inſtantly cauſed a truſty friend to make what enquiries he could about Tomlinſon.

☞ I had thoughts to have done it before I had this intelligence: But not imagining it to be needful, and little thinking that you could be in ſuch a houſe, and as you were pleaſed with your changed
☞ proſpects, I forbore. And the rather forbore, as the matter is ſo laid, that Mrs. Hodges is ſuppoſed to know nothing of the projected treaty of accommo-

dation; but, on the contrary, that it was designed to be a secret to her, and to every-body but immediate parties; and it was Mrs. Hodges that I had proposed to sound by a *second* hand.

☞ Now, my dear, it is certain, without applying to that too-much favoured housekeeper, that there is not such a man within ten miles of your Uncle. Very true! One *Tomkins* there is, about four miles off; but he is a day-labourer: And one *Thompson*, about five miles distant the other way; but he is a parish schoolmaster, poor, and about seventy.

☞ A man, tho' but of 800l. a year, cannot come from one country to settle in another, but every-body in both must know it, and talk of it.

☞ Mrs. Hodges may yet be sounded at a distance, if you will. Your Uncle is an old man. Old men imagine themselves under obligation to their paramours, if younger than themselves, and seldom keep ☞any-thing from their knowledge. But if we suppose him to make secret of the designed treaty, it is impossible, *before* that treaty was thought of, but she must have seen him, at least have *heard* your Uncle speak praisefully of a man he is said to be so intimate with, let him have been ever so little a while in those parts.

☞ Yet, methinks, the story is so plausible: Tomlinson, as you describe him, is so good a man, and so much of a gentleman; the end to be answered by ☞his being an impostor, so much *more than necessary* if Lovelace has villainy in his head; and as you are ☞in such a house—Your wretch's behaviour to him was so petulant and lordly; and Tomlinson's answer so full of spirit and circumstance; and then ☞what he communicated to you of Mr. Hickman's application to your Uncle, and of Mrs. Norton's to your mother [some of which particulars, I am ☞satisfied, his vile agent Joseph Leman could not reveal to his viler employer]; his pressing on the mar-

riage-

riage-day, in the name of your Uncle, which it could
☞not answer any *wicked* purpose for him to do; and
what he writes of your Uncle's proposal, to have it
thought that you were married from the time that
you have lived in one house together; and that to
be made to agree with the time of Mr. Hickman's
☞visit to your Uncle: The insisting on a trusty per-
son's being present at the Ceremony, at that Un-
cle's nomination—*These things make me willing to try for a tolerable construction to be made of all*;
tho' I am so much puzzled by what occurs on both
☞sides of the question, that I cannot but abhor the
devilish wretch, whose inventions and contrivances
☞are for ever employing an inquisitive head, as mine
is, without affording the means of absolute de-
tection.

But this is what I am ready to conjecture, that Tomlinson, specious as he is, is a machine of Lovelace; and that he is employed for some end, which
☞has not yet been answered. This is certain, that
not only Tomlinson, but Mennell, who, I think,
attended you more than once at this vile house,
must know it to *be* a vile house.

What can you then think of Tomlinson's declaring himself in *favour* of it upon enquiry?

Lovelace too must know it to be so; if not before he brought you to it, soon after.

☞ Perhaps the *Company he found there*, may be the most probable way of accounting for his bearing with the house, and for his strange suspensions of marriage, when it was in his power to call such an angel of a woman his.—

☞ O my dear, the man is a villain! the greatest of villains, in every light!—I am convinced that he is. And this Doleman must be another of his implements!

☞ There are so many wretches who think *that* to be no sin, which is one of the greatest, and the most

ingrateful

ingrateful of all ſins, to ruin young creatures of our Sex who place their confidence in them; that the wonder is leſs than the ſhame, that people of figure, of *appearance* at leaſt, are found to promote the horrid purpoſes of profligates of fortune and intereſt!

☞ But can I think [You will aſk with indignant aſtoniſhment] that Lovelace can have deſigns upon your honour?

☞ That ſuch deſigns he *has had*, if he *ſtill* hold them not, I can have no doubt, now that I know the houſe he has brought you to, to be a vile one. This is a clue that has led me to account for all his behaviour to you ever ſince you have been in his hands.

Allow me a brief retroſpection of it all.

We both know, that Pride, Revenge, and a delight to tread in unbeaten paths, are principal ingredients in the character of this finiſhed Libertine.

☞ He hates all your family yourſelf excepted; and I have ſeveral times thought, that I have ſeen him ſtung and mortified that Love has obliged him to ☞kneel at your footſtool, becauſe you are a *Harlowe*.

—Yet is this wretch a Savage in Love.—Love that humanizes the fierceſt ſpirits, has not been able to ☞ſubdue his. His *Pride*, and the credit which a few ☞*plauſible qualities*, ſprinkled among his *odious ones*, have given him, have ſecured him too good a reception from our eye-judging, our undiſtinguiſhing, our ſelf-flattering, our too-confiding Sex, to make aſſiduity and obſequiouſneſs, and a conqueſt of his unruly paſſions, any part of his ſtudy.

☞ He has ſome reaſon for his animoſity to *all* the men, and to *one* woman of your family. He has always ſhewn you, and his own family too, that ☞he prefers his Pride to his Intereſt. He is a declared Marriage-hater: A notorious Intriguer: Full of his inventions; and glorying in them.—He never could draw you into declarations of Love: Nor till your *wife* relations perſecuted you, as they did, to receive his

☞ his addreſſes as a Lover.—He knew, that you profeſſedly diſliked him for his immoralities: he could not therefore juſtly blame you for the coldneſs and indifference of your behaviour to him.

☞ The prevention of miſchief was your firſt main view in the correſpondence he drew you into. He ought not, then, to have wondered, that you declared your preference of the *Single Life* to *any* matrimonial engagement. He knew, that this was *always* your preference; and *that* before he tricked ☞ you away ſo artfully. What was his conduct to you afterwards, that you ſhould of a ſudden change it?

Thus was your whole behaviour regular, conſiſtent, and dutiful to thoſe to whom by birth you owed duty; and neither prudiſh, coquettiſh, nor tyrannical to him.

☞ He had *agreed* to go on with you upon thoſe your own terms, and to rely only on *his own merits* and *future reformation*, for your favour.

☞ It was plain to me, indeed, to whom you communicated all that *you knew* of your own heart, tho' not all of it that *I found out*, that Love had pretty early gained footing in it. And this you yourſelf would have diſcovered ſooner than you did, had not ☞ his alarming, his unpolite, his rough conduct, kept it under.

☞ I knew, by experience, that Love is a fire that is not to be played with, without burning one's fingers: I knew it to be a dangerous thing for two ſingle perſons of different ſexes, to enter into familiarity and correſpondence with each other; ſince, as to the latter, muſt not a perſon be capable of premeditated Art, who can ſit down to write, and not write from the heart?—And a woman to write her heart to a man practiſed in deceit, or even to a man of ſome character, what advantage does it give him over her?

☞ As this man's Vanity had made him imagine,

that

that no woman could be proof againſt Love, when his addreſs was honourable; no wonder that he ſtruggled, like a Lion held in toils, againſt a paſſion that he thought not returned. And how could you, *at firſt*, ſhew a return in Love, to ſo fierce a ſpirit, and who had ſeduced you away by vile artifices, but to the approval of thoſe artifices.

☞ Hence, perhaps, it is not difficult to believe, that it became poſſible for ſuch a wretch as this to give way to his old prejudices againſt Marriage; and to that Revenge which had always been a firſt paſſion with him.

This is the only way, I think, to account for his horrid views in bringing you to a vile houſe.

And now may not all the reſt be naturally accounted for?—His delays—His teazing ways—His bringing you to bear with his lodging in the ſame houſe—His making you paſs to the people of it, as his Wife; *though reſtrictively ſo*, yet with hope, ☞no doubt (vileſt of villains as he is!) to take you at advantage—His bringing you into the company ☞of his Libertine Companions: The attempt of impoſing upon you that Miſs Partington for a bedfellow, very probably his own invention for the worſt of purpoſes: His terrifying you at many different times: His obtruding himſelf upon you when you went out to church; no doubt to prevent your finding out what the people of the houſe were: The advantages he made of your Brother's fooliſh project with Singleton.

See, my dear, how naturally all this follows from the diſcovery made by Miſs Lardner. See how the ☞monſter, whom I thought, and ſo often called, a *fool*, comes out to have been all the time one of the ☞greateſt villains in the world!

But if this be ſo, what [It would be aſked by an indifferent perſon] has hitherto ſaved you? Glorious creature? — What, morally ſpeaking, but your Watch-

Watchfulneſs! What but That, and the Majeſty of your Virtue; *the Native Dignity*, which, in a ſituation ſo very difficult (friendleſs, deſtitute, paſſing for a Wife, caſt into the company of creatures accuſtomed to betray and ruin innocent hearts) has hitherto enabled you to baffle, over-awe, and confound, ſuch a dangerous Libertine as this; ſo habitually remorſeleſs, as you have obſerved him to be; ſo very various in his temper; ſo inventive; ſo ſeconded, ſo ſupported, ſo inſtigated, too probably, as he has been!—That *Native Dignity*, that *Heroiſm*, I will call it, which has, on all proper occaſions, exerted itſelf in its *full* luſtre, unmingled

☞ with that charming obligingneſs and condeſcending ſweetneſs, which is evermore the *ſoftener* of that dignity, when your mind is free and unapprehenſive!

☞ Let me ſtop to admire, and to bleſs my beloved friend, who, unhappily for herſelf, at an age ſo tender, unacquainted as ſhe was with the world, and with the vile arts of Libertines, having been called upon to ſuſtain the hardeſt and moſt ſhocking trials, from perſecuting Relations on one hand, and from a villainous Lover on the other, has been enabled to give ſuch an illuſtrious example of fortitude and prudence, as never woman gave before her; and who, as I have heretofore obſerved (*a*), has made a far greater figure in adverſity, than ſhe poſſibly could have made, had all her ſhining qualities been exerted in their full force and power, by the continu-

☞ance of that proſperous run of fortune which attended her for Eighteen years of life out of Nineteen.

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☞ BUT now, my dear, do I apprehend, that you are in greater danger than ever yet you have been in; if you are not married in a week; and yet ſtay in this abominable houſe. For were you out of it, I own I ſhould not be much afraid for you.

(*a*) See Vol. IV. p. 64.

Theſe are my thoughts, on the moſt deliberate conſideration: 'That he is now convinced, that he 'has not been able to draw you off your guard: 'That therefore, if he can obtain no new advan- 'tage over you as he goes along, he is reſolved to 'do you all the *poor juſtice* that it is in the power of 'ſuch a wretch as he, to do you. He is the rather 'induced to this, as he ſees, that all his own family 'have warmly engaged themſelves in your cauſe: 'and that it is his *higheſt intereſt* to be juſt to you. 'Then the horrid wretch loves you (as well he 'may) above all women. I have no doubt of this; 'with *ſuch* a Love as ſuch a wretch is capable of: 'With *ſuch* a Love as Herod loved his Mariamne. 'He is now therefore, very probably, at laſt, in 'earneſt.'

I took time for enquiries of different natures, as I knew by the train you are in, that whatever his deſigns are, they cannot ripen either for good or evil, till ſomething ſhall reſult from this new device of his about Tomlinſon and your Uncle.

Device I have no doubt that it is, whatever this dark, this impenetrable ſpirit intends by it.

And yet I find it to be true, that Counſellor Williams (whom Mr. Hickman knows to be a man of eminence in his profeſſion) has actually as good as finiſhed the ſettlements: That two Draughts of them have been made; one avowedly to be ſent to one Captain Tomlinſon, as the Clerk ſays:—And I find that a Licence has actually been more than once endeavoured to be obtained; and that difficulties have hitherto been made, equally to Lovelace's vexation and diſappointment. My Mother's Proctor, who is very intimate with the Proctor applied to by the wretch, has come at this information in confidence; and hints, that, as Mr. Lovelace is a man of high fortunes, theſe difficulties will probably be got over.

But

But here follow the cauſes of my apprehenſion of your danger; which I ſhould not have had a thought of (ſince nothing *very* vile has yet been attempted) but on finding what a houſe you are in, and, on that diſcovery, laying together and ruminating on paſt occurrences.

'You are obliged, from the preſent favourable appearances, to give him your company whenever 'he requeſts it.—You are under a neceſſity of for-'getting, or ſeeming to forget, paſt diſobligations; 'and to receive his addreſſes as thoſe of a betrothed 'Lover —You will incur the cenſure of prudery 'and affectation, even perhaps in your own appre-'henſion, if you keep him at that diſtance which has hitherto been your ſecurity. —His ſudden '(and as ſuddenly recovered) illneſs has given him 'an opportunity to find out, that you love him. '[*Alas, my dear, I knew you loved him!*] He is, as you relate, every hour more and more an en-'croacher, upon it. He has ſeemed to change his 'nature, and is all love and gentleneſs. The wolf has put on the ſheep's cloathing; yet more than 'once has ſhewn his teeth, and his hardly ſheathed 'claws. The inſtance you have given of his free-'dom with your perſon (*a*), which you could not 'but reſent; and yet, as matters are circumſtanced 'between you, could not but paſs over, when 'Tomlinſon's Letter called you into his company (*b*), ſhew the advantage he has now over you; 'and alſo, that if he can obtain greater, he will.— 'And for this very reaſon (as I apprehend) it is, 'that Tomlinſon is introduced; that is to ſay, to give you the greater ſecurity, and to be a media-'tor, if mortal offence be given you, by any vil-

(*a*) She means the freedom Mr. Lovelace took with her before the Fire-plot. See Vol. IV. Letter liv. When Miſs Howe wrote this Letter, ſhe could not know of that.

(*b*) See Vol. IV. Letter lv.

'lainous

'lainous attempt.—The day ſeems not now to be
'ſo much in your power as it ought to be, ſince
'That now partly depends on your Uncle, whoſe
'preſence, at your own motion, he has wiſhed on
'the occaſion. A wiſh, were all real, very un-
'likely, I think, to be granted.'

☞ And thus ſituated, ſhould he offer greater free-
doms, muſt you not forgive him?

I fear nothing (as I know who has ſaid) that devil
carnate or incarnate can fairly do againſt a virtue ſo
☞eſtabliſhed (*a*).—But Surprizes, my dear, in ſuch
a houſe as that you are in, and in ſuch circumſtances
as I have mentioned, I greatly fear!—The man,
☞one, who has already triumphed over perſons wor-
thy of his alliance.

☞ What then have you to do, but to fly this houſe,
this infernal houſe!—O that your heart would let
you fly the *man!*

☞ If you ſhould be diſpoſed ſo to do, Mrs. Town-
ſend ſhall be ready at your command.—But if you
meet with no impediments, no new cauſes of doubt,
I think your reputation in the eye of the world,
though not your happineſs, is concerned, that you
☞ſhould be his —And yet I cannot bear, that theſe
Libertines ſhould be rewarded for their villainy with
the beſt of the Sex, when the worſt of it are too
good for them.

But if you meet with the leaſt ground for ſuſpi-
cion; if he would detain you at the odious houſe,
or wiſh you to ſtay, now you know what the people
☞are; fly *him*, whatever your proſpects are, as well
as *them*.

In one of your next Airings, if you have no other
☞way, refuſe to return with him. Name me for your
intelligencer, that you are in a bad houſe, and if you
think you cannot now break with him, ſeem rather
to believe that he may not know it to be ſo; and

(*a*) See Mrs. Norton's Letter, Vol. IV. p. 70.

that

that I do not believe he does: And yet this belief in us both muſt appear to be very groſs.

But ſuppoſe you deſire to go out of town for the air, this ſultry weather, and inſiſt upon it? You may plead your health for ſo doing. He dare not reſiſt ſuch a plea. Your Brother's fooliſh ſcheme, I am told, is certainly given up; ſo you need not be afraid on that account.

If you do not fly the houſe upon reading of this, or ſome way or other get out of it, I ſhall judge of his power over you, by the little you will have over either him or yourſelf.

One of my informers has made ſlight enquiries concerning Mrs. Fretchville. Did he ever name to you the Street or Square ſhe lived in?—I don't remember that you, in any of yours, mentioned the place of her abode to me. Strange, very ſtrange, This, I think! No ſuch perſon or houſe can be found, near any of the new Streets or Squares, where the lights I had from your letters led me to imagine her houſe might be—Aſk him, What Street the houſe is in, if he has not told you? And let me know. If he make a difficulty of that circumſtance, it will amount to a detection.—And yet, I think, you have enough without this.

I ſhall ſend this long Letter by Collins, who changes his day to oblige me; and that he may try (now I know where you are) to get it into your own hands. If he cannot, he will leave it at Wilſon's. As none of our Letters by that conveyance have miſcarried when you have been in more *apparently* diſagreeable ſituations than you are in at preſent. I hope that this will go ſafe, if Collins ſhould be obliged to leave it there.

I wrote a ſhort Letter to you in my firſt agitations. It contained not above twenty lines, all full of fright, alarm, and execration. But being afraid, that my vehemence would too much affect you, I

thought

thought it better to wait a little, as well for the reaſons already hinted at, as to be able to give you as many particulars as I could; and my thoughts upon all. And now, I think, taking to your aid other circumſtances, as they *have* offered, or *may* offer, you will be ſufficiently armed to reſiſt all his machinations, be what they will.

☞ One word more. Command me up, if I can be of the leaſt ſervice or pleaſure to you. I value not Fame; I value not Cenſure; nor even Life itſelf, I verily think, as I do your Honour, and your Friendſhip—For, is not your Honour my Honour? And is not your Friendſhip the Pride of my Life?

May Heaven preſerve you, my deareſt creature, in Honour and Safety, is the prayer, the hourly prayer, of

Your ever-faithful and affectionate
ANNA HOWE.

Thurſday Morn. 5. I have written all night.

To Miſs HOWE.

My deareſt Creature.

HOW you have ſhocked, confounded, ſurpriſed, aſtoniſhed me, by your dreadful communication!—My *heart is too weak* to bear up againſt ſuch a ſtroke at this!—When all hope was with me! When my proſpects were ſo much mended!—But can there be ſuch villainy in men, as in this vile principal, and equally vile agent!

I am really ill—Very ill—Grief and Surprize, and, *now* I will ſay, Deſpair, have overcome me!—All, all, you have laid down as conjecture, appears to *me now* to be *more* than conjecture!

O that your Mother would have the goodneſs to permit me the preſence of the only comforter that my afflicted, my half-broken heart, could be raiſed by

Bu

But I charge you, think not of coming up without her indulgent permiſſion. I am too ill at preſent, my dear, to think of combating with this dreadful man; and of flying from this horrid houſe!—*My bad writing will ſhew you this.*—But my illneſs will be my preſent ſecurity, ſhould he indeed have meditated villainy.—Forgive, O forgive me, my deareſt friend, the trouble I have given you!—All muſt ſoon—But why add I grief to grief, and trouble to trouble?—But I charge you, my beloved creature, not to think of coming up without your Mother's leave, to the truly deſolate and broken-ſpirited

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

WELL, Jack!—And what thinkeſt thou of this laſt Letter? Miſs Howe values not either *Fame* or *Cenſure*; and thinkeſt thou, that this Letter will not bring the little Fury up, tho' ſhe could procure no other conveyance than her higgler's paniers, one for herſelf, the other for her maid? She knows whither to come now. Many a little villain have I puniſhed for knowing more than I would have her know, and that by adding to her knowledge and experience. What thinkeſt thou Belford, if, by getting hither this virago, and giving *cauſe* for a lamentable Letter from her to the fair Fugitive, I ſhould be able to recover *her?* Would ſhe not viſit that friend in *her* diſtreſs, thinkeſt thou, whoſe intended viſit to her in *hers* brought her into the condition from which ſhe herſelf had ſo perfidiouſly eſcaped?

Let me enjoy the thought!

Shall I ſend this Letter?—Thou ſeeſt I have left room, if I fail in the exact imitation of ſo charming a hand, to avoid too ſtrict a ſcrutiny. Do they not both deſerve it of me? Seeſt thou not how the raving girl threatens her Mother? Ought ſhe not to be puniſhed? And can I be a worſe devil, or villain, or monſter, than ſhe calls me in the long Letter I incloſe (and has called

me

me in her former Letters) were I to punish them both as my vengeance urges me to punish them? And when I have executed That my vengeance, how charmingly satisfied may they both go down into the country and keep house together, and have a much better reason than their pride could give them, for living the Single Life they have both seemed so fond of!

I will set about transcribing it this moment, I think. I can resolve afterwards. Yet what has poor Hickman done to deserve this of me!—But gloriously would it punish the Mother (as well as Daughter) for all her sordid avarice; and for her undutifulness to honest Mr. Howe, whose heart she actually broke. I am on tiptoe, Jack, to enter upon this project. Is not one country as good to me as another, if I should be obliged to take another tour upon it?

* * * * *

BUT I will not venture. Hickman is a good man, they tell me. I love a good man. I hope one of these days to be a good man myself. Besides, I have heard within this week something of this honest fellow that shews he has a Soul; when I thought, if he had one, that it lay a little of the deepest to emerge to notice, except on very extraordinary occasions; and that then it presently sunk again into its *Cellula adiposa*.—The man is a *plump man*.—Didst ever see him, Jack?

But the principal reason that with-holds me [For 'tis a tempting project!] is, for fear of being utterly blown up, if I should not be quick enough with my Letter, or if Miss Howe should deliberate on setting out, to try her mother's consent first; in which time a Letter from my frighted beauty might reach her; for I have no doubt, where-ever she has refuged, but her first work was to write to her vixen friend. I will therefore go on patiently; and take my revenge upon the little Fury at my leisure.

But, in spite of my compassion for Hickman, whose better character is sometimes my envy, and who is one

of

of thoſe mortals that bring clumſineſs into credit with the *Mothers*, to the diſgrace of us clever fellows, and often to our diſappointment, with the *Daughters*; and who has been very buſy in aſſiſting theſe double-armed Beauties againſt me; I ſwear by all the *Dii Majores*, as well as *Minores*, that I will have Miſs Howe, if I cannot have her more exalted friend! And then, if there be as much flaming Love between theſe girls as they pretend, what will my charmer profit by her eſcape?

And now, that I ſhall permit Miſs Howe to reign a little longer, let me aſk thee, If thou haſt not, in the incloſed Letter, a freſh inſtance, that a great many of my difficulties with her Siſter-toaſt are owing to this flighty-girl? —'Tis true, that here was naturally a confounded ſharp winter air; and if a little cold water was thrown into the path, no wonder that it was inſtantly frozen; and that the poor honeſt traveller found it next to impoſſible to keep his way; one foot ſliding back as faſt as the other advanced, to the endangering of his limbs or neck. But yet I think it impoſſible, that ſhe ſhould have baffled me as ſhe has done (novice as ſhe is, and never before from under her parents wings) had ſhe not been armed by a virago, who was formerly very near ſhewing, that ſhe could better adviſe than practiſe. But this, I believe, I have ſaid more than once before.

I am loth to reproach *myſelf*, now the cruel creature has eſcaped me; for what would that do, but add to my torment? ſince evils ſelf-cauſed, and avoidable, admit not of palliation or comfort. And yet, if *thou* telleſt me, that all *her* ſtrength was owing to *my* weakneſs, and that I have been a curſed coward in this whole affair; why then, Jack, I may bluſh, and be vexed; but, by my ſoul, I cannot contradict thee.

But this, Belford, I hope—that if I can turn the poiſon of the incloſed Letter into wholeſome aliment; that is to ſay, if I can make uſe of it to my advantage; I ſhall have *thy* free conſent to do it.

I am always careful to open Covers cautiouſly, and to preſerve Seals entire. I will draw out from this curſed Letter an alphabet. Nor was Nick Rowe ever half ſo diligent to learn Spaniſh, at the Quixote recommendation of a certain Peer, as I will be to gain the maſtery of this vixen's hand.

LETTER V.

Miſs CLARISSA HARLOWE, *To Miſs* HOWE.

Thurſday Evening, June 8.

AFter my laſt, ſo full of other hopes, the contents of This will ſurpriſe you. O my deareſt friend, the man has at laſt proved himſelf to be a villain!

It was with the utmoſt difficulty laſt night, that I preſerved myſelf from the vileſt diſhonour. He extorted from me a promiſe of forgiveneſs, and that I would ſee him next day, as if nothing had happened: But if it were poſſible to eſcape from a wretch, who, as I have too much reaſon to believe, formed a plot to fire the houſe, to frighten me, almoſt naked, into his arms, how could I ſee him next day?

I have eſcaped—Heaven be praiſed that I have!—And have now no other concern, than that I fly from the only hope that could have made ſuch an huſband tolerable to me; The Reconciliation with my friends, ſo agreeably undertaken by my Uncle.

All my preſent hope is, To find ſome reputable family, or perſon of my own Sex, who is obliged to go beyond ſea, or who lives abroad; I care not whether; but if I might chuſe, in ſome one of our American colonies—Never to be heard of more by my relations, whom I have ſo grievouſly offended.

Nor let your generous heart be moved at what I write. If I can eſcape the dreadfulleſt part of my Father's malediction (for the temporary part is already in a manner fulfilled, which makes me tremble in ap-

prehenſion of the other) I ſhall think the wreck of my worldly fortunes a happy compoſition.

Neither is there need of the renewal of your ſo often tendered goodneſs to me: For I have with me Rings and other valuables, that were ſent me with my cloaths, which will turn into money to anſwer all I can want, till Providence ſhall be pleaſed to put me into ſome way to help myſelf, if, for my further puniſhment, my life is to be lengthened beyond my wiſhes.

Impute not this ſcheme, my beloved friend, either to dejection on one hand, or to that romantic turn on the other, which we have ſuppoſed generally to obtain with our Sex, from Fifteen to Twenty two: For, be pleaſed to conſider my unhappy ſituation, in the light in which it really muſt appear to every conſiderate perſon, who knows it. In the firſt place, the man, who has had the aſſurance to think me, and to endeavour to make me, his *property*, will hunt me from place to place, and ſearch after me as a Stray: And he knows he may do ſo with impunity; for whom have I to protect me from him?

Then as to my Eſtate, the envied Eſtate, which has been the original cauſe of all my misfortunes, it ſhall never be mine upon litigated terms. What is there in being enabled to boaſt, that I am worth more than *I can uſe*, or *wiſh to uſe*? And if my power is circumſcribed, I ſhall not have that to anſwer for, which I ſhould have, if I did not uſe it as I ought: Which very few do. I ſhall have no huſband, of whoſe intereſt I ought to be ſo regardful, as to prevent me doing *more* than juſtice to others, that I may not do *leſs* to him. If therefore my father will be pleaſed (as I ſhall preſume, in proper time, to propoſe to him) to pay two annuities out of it, one to my dear Mrs. Norton, which may make her eaſy for the remainder of her life, as ſhe is now growing into years; the other of 50 *l.* *per annum*, to the ſame good woman, for the uſe of *My Poor*, as I have had the vanity to

call a certain ſet of people, concerning whom ſhe knows all my mind; that ſo as few as poſſible may ſuffer by the conſequences of my error; God bleſs them, and give them heart's eaſe and content, with the reſt!

Other reaſons for my taking the ſtep I have hinted at, are theſe:

This wicked man knows I have no friend in the world but you: Your neighbourhood therefore would be the firſt he would ſeek for me in, were you to think it poſſible for me to be concealed in it: And in this caſe You might be ſubjected to inconveniences greater even than thoſe which you have already ſuſtained on my account.

From my Couſin Morden, were he to come, I could not hope protection; ſince, by his Letter to me, it is evident, that my Brother has engaged him in his party: Nor would I, by any means, ſubject ſo worthy a man to danger; as might be the caſe, from the violence of this ungovernable ſpirit.

Theſe things conſidered, what better method can I take, than to go abroad to ſome one of the Engliſh Colonies; where nobody but yourſelf ſhall know any thing of me; nor You, let me tell you, preſently, nor till I am fixed, and (if it pleaſe God) in a courſe of living tolerably to my mind? For it is no ſmall part of my concern, that my indiſcretions have laid ſo heavy a tax upon You, my dear friend, to whom, once, I hoped to give more pleaſure than pain.

I am at preſent at one Mrs. Moor's at Hamſtead. My heart miſgave me at coming to this village, becauſe I had been here with him more than once: But the coach hither was ſo ready a conveniency, that I knew not what to do better. Then I ſhall ſtay here no longer than till I can receive your anſwer to this: In which you will be pleaſed to let me know, if I cannot be hid, according to your former contrivance [Happy, had I given into it at the time!] by Mrs.

Town-

Townſend's aſſiſtance, till the heat of his ſearch be over. The Deptford road, I imagine, will be the right direction to hear of a paſſage, and to get ſafely aboard.

O why was the great fiend of all unchained, and permitted to aſſume ſo ſpecious a form, and yet allowed to conceal his feet and his talons, till with the one he was ready to trample upon my honour, and to ſtrike the other into my heart!—And what had I done, that he ſhould be let looſe particularly upon me!

Forgive me this murmuring queſtion, the effect of my impatience, my *guilty* impatience, I doubt: For, as I have eſcaped with my Honour, and nothing but my worldly proſpects, and my pride, my ambition, and my vanity, have ſuffered in this wreck of my hope-fuller fortunes, may I not ſtill be more happy than I deſerve to be? And is it not in my own power ſtill, by the Divine favour, to ſecure the great ſtake of all? And who knows but that this very path into which my inconſideration has thrown me, ſtrew'd as it is with briers and thorns, which tear in pieces my gaudier trappings, may not be the right path to lead me into the great road to my future happineſs; which might have been endangered by evil communication?

And after all, Are there not ſtill more deſerving perſons than I, who never failed in any capital point of duty, that have been more humbled than myſelf; and ſome too, by the errors of Parents and Relations, by the tricks and baſeneſs of Guardians and Truſtees, and in which their own raſhneſs or folly had no part?

I will then endeavour to make the beſt of my preſent lot. And join with me, my beſt, my only friend, in praying, That my puniſhment may end here; and that my preſent afflictions may be ſanctified to me.

This Letter will enable you to account for a line or two, which I ſent to Wilſon's, to be carried to you, only for a feint, to get his ſervant out of the way. He ſeemed to be left, as I thought, for a Spy upon me.

But he returning too ſoon, I was forced to write a few lines for him to carry to his Maſter, to a tavern near Doctors-Commons, with the ſame view: And this happily anſwered my end.

I wrote early in the morning a bitter Letter to the wretch, which I left for him obvious enough; and I ſuppoſe he has it by this time. I kept no copy of it. I ſhall recollect the contents, and give you the particulars of all, at more leiſure.

I am ſure you will approve of my eſcape--The rather, as the people of the houſe muſt be very vile: For they, and that Dorcas too, did hear me (I know they did) cry out for help: If the fire had been other than a villainous plot (altho' in the morning, to blind them, I pretended to think it otherwiſe) they would have been alarmed as much as I; and have run in, hearing me ſcream, to *comfort me*, ſuppoſing my terror was the fire; to *relieve me*, ſuppoſing it were any thing elſe. But the vile Dorcas went away as ſoon as ſhe ſaw the wretch throw his arms about me!—Bleſs me, my dear, I had only my ſlippers and an under-petticoat on. I was frighted out of my bed, by her cries of fire; and that I ſhould be burnt to aſhes in a moment—And ſhe to go away, and never to return, nor any body elſe! And yet I heard women's voices in the next room; indeed I did—An evident contrivance of them all:—God be praiſed, I am out of their houſe!

My terror is not yet over: I can hardly think myſelf ſafe: Every well-dreſſed man I ſee from my windows, whether on horſeback or on foot, I think to be him.

I know you will expedite an anſwer. A man and horſe will be procured me to-morrow early, to carry This. To be ſure, you cannot return an anſwer by the ſame man, becauſe you muſt ſee Mrs. Townſend firſt: Nevertheleſs, I ſhall wait with impatience till you

you *can*; having no friend but you to apply to; and being ſuch a ſtranger to this part of the world, that I know not which way to turn myſelf; whither to go; nor what to do—What a dreadful hand have I made of it!

Mrs. Moore, at whoſe houſe I am, is a widow, and of good character: And of this one of her neighbours, of whom I bought a handkerchief, purpoſely to make enquiry before I would venture, informed me.

I will not ſet my foot out of doors, till I have your direction: And I am the more ſecure, having dropt words to the people of the houſe where the coach ſet me down, as if I expected a chariot to meet me in my way to Hendon; a village a little diſtance from this. —And when I left their houſe, I walked backward and forward upon the hill; at firſt, not knowing what to do; and afterwards, to be certain that I was not watched before I ventured to enquire after a lodging.

You will direct for me, my dear, by the name of Mrs. Harriot Lucas.

Had I not made my eſcape when I did, I was reſolved to attempt it again and again. He was gone to the Commons for a Licence, as he wrote me word; for I refuſed to ſee him, notwithſtanding the promiſe he extorted from me.

How hard, how next-to-impoſſible, my dear, to avoid many *leſſer* deviations, when we are betrayed into a *capital* one!

For fear I ſhould not get away at my firſt effort, I had apprized him, that I would not ſet eye upon him under a week, in order to gain myſelf time for it in different ways—And were I ſo to have been watched as to have made it neceſſary, I would, after ſuch an inſtance of the connivance of the women of the houſe, have run out into the Street, and thrown myſelf into the next houſe I could have entered, or claim protection from the firſt perſon I had met—*Women to deſert the cauſe of a poor creature of their own Sex*

in such a Situation, what must they be!—Then, such poor guilty sort of figures did they make in the morning after he was gone out—so earnest to get me up stairs, and to convince me, by the scorched window-boards, and burnt curtains and vallens, that the fire was real—that (although I seemed to believe all they would have me believe) I was more and more resolved to get out of their house at all adventures.

When I began, I thought to write but a few lines. But, be my subject what it will, I know not how to conclude when I write to *you*. It was *always* so: It is not therefore owing peculiarly to that most interesting and unhappy Situation, which you will allow however, to engross at present the whole mind of

Your unhappy, but ever-affectionate

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

LETTER VI.

Mr. LOVELACE, *To* JOHN BELFORD, *Esq.*

Friday Morning, past Two o'Clock.

IO Triumphe! Io Clarissa, sing!—Once more, what a happy man thy friend!—A silly dear novice, to be heard to tell the coachman whether to carry her!—And to go to *Hamstead*, of all the villages about London!—The place where we had been together more than once!

Methinks I am sorry she managed no better!—I shall find the recovery of her too easy a task, I fear! Had she but known how much difficulty enhances the value of any thing with me, and had she had the least notion of obliging me by it, she would never have stopt short at *Hamstead*, surely.

Well, but after all this exultation, thou wilt ask, 'If I have already got back my Charmer?—I have not: But knowing where she is, is almost the same thing as having her in my power. And it delights me to think how she will start and tremble when I first

pop

pop upon her! How she will look with conscious guilt, that will more than wipe off my guilt of Wednesday night, when she sees her injured Lover, and acknowledged Husband, from whom, the greatest of felonies, she would have stolen herself.

But thou wilt be impatient to know how I came by my lights. Read the inclosed here, and remember the instructions which from time to time, as I have told thee, I have given my fellow, in apprehension of such an elopement; and that will tell thee all, and what I may reasonably expect from the rascal's diligence and management, if he wishes ever to see my face again.

I received it about half an hour ago, just as I was going to lie down in my cloaths: And it has made me so much alive, that, midnight as it is, I have sent for a Blunt's chariot, to attend me here by day peep, with *my usual coachman*, if possible; and knowing not else what to do with myself, I sat down, and, in the joy of my heart, have not only written thus far, but have concluded upon the measures I shall take when admitted to her presence: For well am I aware of the difficulties I shall have to contend with from her perverseness.

Honnored Sur,

THIS is to sertifie your Honner, as how I am heer at Hamestet, where I have found out my Lady to be in logins at one Mrs. Moore's, near upon Hamstet-Hethe. And I have so ordered matters, that her Ladiship cannot stur but I must have notice of her goins and comins. As I knowed I dursted not look into your Honner's sase, if I had not found out my Lady, thoff she was gone off the prems's in a quarter of an hour, as a man may say; so I knowed you would be glad at hart to know I have found her out: And so I send thiss Petur Patrick, who is to have 5 shillings, it being now near 12 of the clock at nite; for he would not stur without a hearty drink too besides: And I was

willing all shulde be snug likeways at the logins before I sent.

I have munny of youre Honner's; but I thought as how if the man was payed by me beforend, he mought play trix; so left that to your Honner.

My Lady knows nothing of my being hereaway. But I thoute it best not to leve the plase, because she has taken the logins but for a fue nites.

If your Honner come to the Upper Flax, I will be in site all the day about the Tapp-house or the Hethe. I have borroued another cote, instead of your Honner's liferie, and a blacke wigg; so cannot he knoen by my Lady, iff as howe she shuld see me: And have made as if I had the tooth-ake; so with my hancriffe at my mothe, the teth which your Honner was pleased to bett out with your Honner's fyste, and my dam'd wide mothe, as your Honner notifys it to be, cannot be knoen to be mine.

The two inner Letters I had from my Lady, before she went off the prems's. One was to be left at Mr. Wilson's for Miss Howe. The next was to be for your Honner. But I knowed you was not at the plase directed; and being afear'd of what fell out, so I kept them for your Honner, and so could not give um to you, until I seed you. Miss How's I only made belief to her Ladiship as I carried it, and sed as how there was nothing left for hur, as she wished to knoe: So here they be bothe.

I am, may it please your Honner,

Your Honner's most dutiful,

and, wonce more, happy Servant,

Wm. Summers.

The two *inner* Letters, as Will. calls them, 'tis plain, were written for no other purpose, but to send him out of the way with them, and one of them to amuse me. That directed to Miss Howe is only this:

Thurs-

Thurſday, June 8.

I Write this, my dear Miſs Howe, only for a feint, and to ſee if it will go current. I ſhall write at large very ſoon, if not miſerably prevented!!!

CL. H.

Now, Jack, will not *her feints* juſtify *mine!* Does ſhe not invade my province, thinkeſt thou? And is it not now fairly come to *Who ſhall moſt deceive and cheat the other?* So, I thank my Stars, we are upon a par, at laſt, as to this point—Which is a great eaſe to my conſcience, thou muſt believe. And if what Hudibras tells us is true, the dear fugitive has alſo abundance of pleaſure to come.

Doubtleſs the pleaſure is as great
In being cheated, as to cheat.
As lookers-on find moſt delight,
Who leaſt perceive the juggler's ſleight;
And ſtill the leſs they underſtand,
The more admire the ſlight of hand.

This my dear juggler's Letter to me; the other *inner* Letter ſent by Will.

Mr. Lovelace, *Thurſday, June* 8.

DO not give me cauſe to dread your return. If you would not that I ſhould hate you for ever, ſend me half a Line by the bearer, to aſſure me that you will not attempt to ſee me for a week to come. I cannot look you in the face without equal confuſion and indignation. The obliging me in This is but a poor atonement for your laſt night's vile behaviour.

You may paſs this time in a journey to Lord M's: And I cannot doubt, if the Ladies of your family are as favourable to me, as you have aſſured me they are, but that you will have intereſt enough to prevail with one of them to oblige me with their company. After

your baſeneſs of laſt night, you will not wonder, that I inſiſt upon this proof of your future honour.

If captain Tomlinſon comes mean time, I can hear what he has to ſay, and ſend you an account of it.

But in leſs than a Week if you ſee me, it muſt be owing to a freſh act of violence, of which you know not the conſequence.

Send me the requeſted line, if ever you expect to have the forgiveneſs confirmed, the promiſe of which you extorted from

The unhappy

CL. H.

Now, Belford, what canſt thou ſay in behalf of this ſweet rogue of a Lady? What *canſt* thou ſay for her? 'Tis apparent, that ſhe was fully determined upon an Elopement, when ſhe wrote it: And thus would ſhe make me of party againſt myſelf, by drawing me in to give her a week's time to complete it: And, more wicked ſtill, ſend me upon a fool's errand to bring up one of my Couſins:—When we came to have the ſatisfaction of finding her gone off, and me expoſed for ever!—What puniſhment can be bad enough for ſuch a little villain of a Lady!

But mind, moreover, how plauſibly ſhe accounts by this billet (ſuppoſing ſhe ſhould not find an opportunity of eloping before I returned) for the reſolution of not ſeeing me for a week; and for the bread and butter expedient!—So childiſh as we thought it!

The chariot is not come; and if it were, it is yet too ſoon for every-thing but my impatience. And as I have already taken all my meaſures, and can think of nothing but my triumph, I will reſume her violent Letter, in order to ſtrengthen my reſolutions againſt her. I was *before* in too gloomy a way to proceed with it: But now the ſubject is all alive to me, and my gayer fancy, like the Sun-beams, will irradiate it, and turn the ſolemn deep green into a brighter verdure.

When

When I have called upon my charmer to explain ſome parts of her Letter, and to atone for others, I will ſend it, or a copy of it, to thee.

Suffice it at preſent to tell thee, in the firſt place, that *ſhe is determined never to be my wife*—To be ſure, there ought to be no compulſion in ſo material a caſe. Compulſion was her parents fault, which I have cenſured ſo ſeverely, that I ſhall hardly be guilty of the ſame. I am therefore glad I know her mind as to this eſſential point.

I have *ruined* her, ſhe ſays! —Now that's a fib, take it her own way—If I had, ſhe would not perhaps have run away from me.

She is *thrown upon the wide world:* Now I own that Hamſtead-Heath affords very pretty and very *extenſive* proſpects; but 'tis not the *wide world* neither: And ſuppoſe that to be her grievance, I hope ſoon to reſtore her to a *narrower*.

I am the *enemy of her ſoul, as well as of her honour!*—Confoundedly ſevere! Nevertheleſs, another fib!—For I love her ſoul very well; but think no more of it in this caſe than of my own.

She is to be *thrown upon ſtrangers!*—And is not that her own fault!—Much againſt my will, I am ſure!

She is caſt from a State of *Independency* into one of *Obligation.* She never was in a State of *Independency*; nor is it fit a woman ſhould, of any age, or in any State of Life. And as to the State of Obligation, there is no ſuch thing as living without being beholden to ſome-body. Mutual obligation is the very eſſence and ſoul of the ſocial and commercial life:—Why ſhould ſhe be exempt from it?—I am ſure the perſon ſhe raves at, deſires not ſuch an exemption;—has been long *dependent* upon her; and would rejoice to owe *further obligations* to her than he can boaſt of hitherto.

She talks of her *Father's curſe*—But have I not repaid him for it an hundred fold in the ſame coin? But

why

why muſt the faults of other people be laid at my door? Have I not enow of my own?

But the grey-eyed dawn begins to peep—Let me ſum up all.

In ſhort, then, the dear creature's Letter is a collection of invectives not very new to *me*; though the occaſion for them, no doubt, is new to *her*. A little ſprinkling of the romantic and contradictory runs thro' it. She loves, and ſhe hates: She encourages me to purſue her, by telling me I ſafely may; and yet ſhe begs I will not: She apprehends poverty and want, yet reſolves to give away her eſtate; to gratify whom? —Why, in ſhort, thoſe who have been the cauſe of her misfortunes. And finally, tho' ſhe reſolves never to be mine, yet ſhe has ſome regrets at leaving me, becauſe of the opening proſpects of a Reconciliation with her friends.

But never did morning dawn ſo tardily as this!—Neither is the chariot yet come.

* * * *
* * *

A GENTLEMAN to ſpeak with me, Dorcas?—Who can want me thus early?

Captain Tomlinſon, ſayſt thou: Surely he muſt have travelled all night!—Early riſer as I am, how could he think to find me up *thus* early?

Let but the chariot come, and he ſhall accompany me in it to the bottom of the hill (tho' he return to town on foot; for the Captain is all obliging goodneſs) that I may hear all he has to ſay, and tell him all my mind, and loſe no time.

Well, now I am ſatisfied that this rebellious flight will turn to my advantage, as all cruſhed rebellions do to the advantage of a Sovereign in poſſeſſion.

* * * *
* * *

DEAR Captain, I rejoice to ſee you—Juſt in the nick of time—See! See!

The

The rosy-finger'd morn appears,
And from her mantle shakes her tears:
The Sun arising, mortals chears;
And drives the rising mists away,
In promise of a glorious day.

Excuse me, Sir, that I salute you from my favourite Bard. He that rises with the Lark, will sing with the Lark. Strange news since I saw you, Captain!—Poor mistaken Lady!—But you have too much goodness, I know, to reveal to her Uncle Harlowe the errors of this capricious Beauty. It will all turn out for the best. You must accompany me part of the way. I know the delight you take in composing differences. But 'tis the task of the Prudent to heal the breaches made by the rashness and folly of the Imprudent.

* * * * *

And now (all round me so still, and so silent) the rattling of the chariot-wheels at a Street's distance do I hear!—And to this angel of a woman I fly!

Reward, O God of Love [The cause is thy own]; reward thou, as it deserves, my suffering perseverance! —Succeed my endeavours to bring back to thy obedience this charming fugitive?—Make her acknowlege her rashness; repent her insults; implore my forgiveness; beg to be reinstated in my favour, and that I will bury in oblivion the remembrance of her heinous offence against thee, and against me, thy faithful votary.

* * * * *

The chariot at the door!—I come! I come—
I attend you, good Captain—
Indeed, Sir—
Pray, Sir—Civility is not Ceremony.

And now, dressed like a Bridegroom, my heart elated beyond that of the most desiring one (attended by a footman whom my Beloved never saw) I am already at Hamstead!

LET-

LETTER VII.

Mr. LOVELACE, *To* JOHN BELFORD, *Esq.*

Upper-Flask, Hamstead, Fri. morn. 7 o'clock. (*June* 9.)

I AM now here, and here have been this hour and half. What an industrious spirit have I!—Nobody can say, that I eat the bread of Idleness. I take true pains for all the pleasure I enjoy. I cannot but admire myself strangely; for certainly, with this active soul, I should have made a very great figure in whatever station I had filled. But had I been a Prince! To be sure I should have made a most *noble* Prince! I should have led up a military dance equal to that of the great Macedonian. I should have added kingdom to kingdom, and despoiled all my neighbour-sovereigns, in order to have obtained the name of *Robert the Great*. And I would have gone to war with the Great Turk, and the Persian, and Mogholl, for the Seraglios; for not one of those Eastern Monarchs should have had a pretty woman to bless himself with, till I had done with her.

And now I have so much leisure upon my hands, that, after having informed myself of all necessary particulars, I am set to my short-hand writing in order to keep up with time as well as I can: For the subject is now become worthy of me; and it is yet too soon, I doubt, to pay my compliments to my charmer, after all her fatigues for two or three days past: And moreover, I have abundance of matters preparative to my future proceedings to recount, in order to connect and render all intelligible.

I parted with the Captain at the foot of the hill, trebly instructed; that is to say, as to the *Fact*, to the *Probable*, and to the *Possible*. If my Beloved and I can meet, and make up without the mediating of this *worthy* gentleman, it will be so much the better. As little foreign aid as possible in my amorous conflicts has

always

always been a rule with me; tho' here I have been obliged to call in so much. And who knows but it may be the better for the Lady the less she makes necessary? I cannot bear that she should sit so indifferent to me as to be in earnest to part with me for ever upon so *slight*, or even upon *any* occasion. *If I find she is*—But no more threatenings till she is in my power—Thou knowest what I have vowed.

All Will's account from the Lady's flight to his finding her again, all the accounts of the people of the house, the coachman's information to Will, and so forth, collected together, stand thus.

'The Hamstead Coach, when the dear Fugitive 'came to it, had but two passengers in it. But she 'made the fellow go off directly, paying for the va-'cant places.

'The two passengers directing the coachman to set 'them down at the Upper-Flask, she bid him set her 'down there also.

'They took leave of her [Very respectfully no 'doubt]; and she went into the house, and asked, if 'she could not have a dish of Tea, and a room to 'herself for half an hour.

'They shewed her up to the very room where I 'now am. She sat at the very table I now write upon; 'and, I believe, the chair I sit in was hers.' O Belford, if thou knowest what Love is, thou wilt be able to account for these *minutiæ*.

'She seemed spiritless and fatigued. The gentle-'woman herself chose to attend so genteel and lovely 'a guest. She asked her, If she would have bread 'and butter with her tea?

'No. She could not eat.

'They had very good biscuits.

'As she pleased.

'The gentlewoman stept out for some; and return-'ing on a sudden, she observed the sweet Fugitive en-'deavouring to restrain a violent burst of grief to 'which she had given way in that little interval.

'However, when the Tea came, she made the 'landlady sit down with her, and asked her abundance 'of questions about the villages and roads in that 'neighbourhood.

'The gentlewoman took notice to her, *that she* '*seemed to be troubled in mind.*

'Tender Spirits, she replied, could not part with '*dear* friends without concern.'

She meant *me*, no doubt.

'She made no enquiry about a lodging, tho' by the 'sequel, thoul't observe, that she seemed to intend to 'go no farther that night than Hamstead. But after 'she had drank two dishes, and put a Biscuit in her 'pocket—[Sweet soul! to serve for her supper per-'haps] she laid down half-a crown; and refusing 'change, sighing, took leave, saying, she would pro-'ceed towards Hendon; the distance to which had 'been one of her question[s].

'They offered to send to know, if a Hamstead 'Coach were not to go to Hendon that evening.

'No matter, she said—Perhaps she might meet 'the chariot?"

Another of her *feints*, I suppose: for how, or with whom, could any thing of this sort have been concerted since yesterday morning?

'She had, as the people took notice to one another, 'something so uncommonly noble in her air, and in 'her person and behaviour, that they were sure she 'was of quality. And having no servant with her of 'either Sex, her eyes [Her fine eyes, the gentle-'woman called them, stranger as she was, and a wo-'man!] being swelled and red, they were sure there 'was an Elopement in the case, either from parents 'or guardians; for they supposed her too young and 'too maidenly to be a married Lady: And were she 'married, no husband would let such a fine young 'creature be unattended and alone; nor give her 'cause for so much grief, as seemed to be settled in

'her

'her countenance. Then, at times, she seemed to 'be so bewildered, they said, that they were afraid 'she had it in her head to make away with herself.

'All these things put together, excited their curi-'osity; and they engaged a *peevy* servant, as they 'called a footman who was drinking with Kit the 'hostler at the taphouse, to watch all her motions. 'This fellow reported the following particulars, as 'they were re-reported to me.

'She indeed went towards Hendon, passing by the 'sign of the Castle on the Heath; then, stopping, 'looked about her, and down into the valley before 'her. Then, turning her face towards London, she 'seemed, by the motion of her handkerchief to her 'eyes, to weep; repenting [Who knows?] the rash 'step she had taken, and wishing herself back again.'

Better for her, if she do, Jack, once more I say! —Woe be to the girl who could think of marrying me, yet be able to run away from me, and renounce me for ever!

'Then, continuing on a few paces, she stopt again; 'and, as if disliking her road, again seeming to weep, 'directed her course back towards Hamstead.'

I am glad she wept so much, because no heart bursts (be the occasion for the sorrow what it will) which has that kindly relief. Hence I hardly ever am moved at the sight of these pellucid fugitives in a fine woman. How often, in the past twelve hours, have I wished, that I could cry most confoundedly!

'She then saw a Coach-and-four driving towards 'her empty. She crossed the path she was in, as if to 'meet it; and seemed to intend to speak to the coach-'man, had he stopt or spoken first. He as earnestly 'looked at *her*. Every one did so, who passed her '(so the man who dogged her was the less suspected) —Happy rogue of a coachman, hadst thou known whose notice thou didst engage, and whom thou mightest have obliged?—It was the divine Clarissa

Harlowe

Harlowe at whom thou gazedſt!—Mine own Clariſſa Harlowe!—But it was well for me that thou wert as undiſtinguiſhing as the beaſts thou droveſt; otherwiſe, what a wild-gooſe chace had I been led?

'The Lady as well as the Coachman, in ſhort, 'ſeemed to want reſolution; the horſes kept on [The 'fellow's head and eyes, no doubt, turned behind 'him;] and the diſtance ſoon lengthened beyond re-'call. With a wiſtful eye ſhe looked after him; 'ſighed and wept again; as the ſervant, who then 'ſtily paſſed her, obſerved.

'By this time ſhe had reached the houſes. She 'looked up at every one, as ſhe paſſed; now-and-then 'breathing upon her bared hand, and applying it to 'her ſwelled eyes, to abate the redneſs, and dry the 'tears. At laſt, ſeeing a bill up for letting lodgings, 'ſhe walked backwards and forwards half a dozen 'times, as if unable to determine what to do. And 'then went farther into the town; and there the fel-'low, being ſpoken to by one of his familiars, loſt 'her for a few minutes: But he ſoon ſaw her come 'out of a linen-drapery ſhop, attended with a ſervant-'maid, having, as he believed, bought ſome little 'matters, and, as it proved, got that maid-ſervant to 'go with her to the houſe ſhe is now at (*a*).

'The fellow, after waiting about an hour, and not 'ſeeing her come out, returned, concluding that ſhe 'had taken lodgings there.'

And here, ſuppoſing my narrative of the dramatic kind, ends Act the firſt. And now begins,

ACT II.

SCENE, *Hamſtead Heath continued.*

Enter my Raſcal.

WILL. having got at all theſe particulars, by exchanging others as frankly againſt them, with which I had formerly prepared him both verbally and

(*a*) See p. 55.

in writing; I found the people already of my party, and full of good wishes for my success, repeating to me all they told him.

But he had first acquainted me with the accounts he had given them of his Lady and me. It is necessary that I give thee the particulars of his tale—And I have a little time upon my hands; for the maid of the house, who had been out of an errand, tells us, that she saw Mrs. Moore [with whom must be my first business] go into the house of a young gentleman, within a few doors of her, who has a maiden Sister, Miss Rawlins by name, *so notify'd* for prudence, that none of her acquaintance undertake any-thing of consequence without consulting her.

Mean while my honest coachman is walking about Miss Rawlins's door, in order to bring me notice of Mrs. Moore's return to her own house. I hope her gossip's-tale will be as soon told as mine. Which take as follows.

Will. told them, before I came, 'That his Lady 'was but lately married to one of the finest gentlemen 'in the world. But that he, being very gay and lively, 'she was *mortal* jealous of him; and in a fit of that 'sort, had eloped from him. For altho' she loved 'him dearly, and he doated upon her (as well he 'might, since, as they had seen, she was the finest 'creature *that ever the sun shone upon*;) yet she was apt 'to be very wilful and sullen, if he might take the 'liberty to say so—but truth was truth;—and if she 'could not have her own way in every thing, would 'be for leaving him. That she had three or four times 'played his master such tricks; but with all the virtue 'and innocence in the world; running away to an 'intimate friend of hers, who, tho' a young Lady of 'honour, was but too indulgent to her in this her '*only* failing; for which reason his master had brought 'her to London-lodgings; their usual residence be-'ing in the country: And that, on his refusing to

'satisfy

'satisfy her about a Lady he had been seen with in 'St. James's Park, she had, for the first time since she 'came to town, served his master thus: Whom he 'had left half-distracted on that account.'

And truly well he might, poor gentleman! cried the honest folks, pitying me before they saw me.

'He told them how he came by his intelligence of 'her; and made himself such an interest with them, 'that they helped him to a change of cloaths for him-'self; and the landlord, at his request, privately en-'quired, if the Lady actually remained at Mrs. 'Moore's; and for how long she had taken the lodg-'ings: Which he found only to be for a week cer-'tain: But she had said, that she believed she should 'hardly stay so long. And then it was that he wrote 'his Letter, and sent it by honest Peter Patrick, as 'thou hast heard.'

When I came, my person and dress having answered Will.'s description, the people were ready to worship me. I now-and-then sighed, now-and-then put on a lighter air; which, however, I designed should shew more of vexation ill-disguised, than of real chearfulness: And they told Will. it was a thousand pities so fine a Lady should have such *skittish tricks*; adding, that she might expose herself to great dangers by them; for that there were Rakes every-where [*Lovelaces in every corner, Jack!*] and many about that town, who would leave nothing unattempted to get into her company: And although they might not prevail upon her, yet might they nevertheless hurt her reputation; and, in time, estrange the affections of so fine a gentleman from her.

Good sensible people, these!—Hay, Jack!

Here, Landlord; one word with you.—My servant, I find, has acquainted you with the reason of my coming this way. An unhappy affair, Landlord! A very unhappy affair! But never was there a more virtuous woman.

So,

So, Sir, ſhe ſeems to be. A thouſand pities her Ladyſhip has ſuch ways—And to ſo good-humoured a gentleman as you ſeem to be, Sir,

Mother-ſpoilt, Landlord!—Mother-ſpoilt! that's the thing!—But, ſighing, I muſt make the beſt of it. What I want *you* to do for me, is to lend me a great coat. I care not what it is. If my ſpouſe ſhould ſee me at a diſtance, ſhe would make it very difficult for me to get at her ſpeech. A great coat with a cape, if you have one. I muſt come upon her before ſhe is aware.

I am afraid, Sir, I have none fit for ſuch a gentleman as you.

O, any-thing will do!—The worſe the better.

Exit Landlord. Re-enter with two great coats.

Ay, Landlord, This will be beſt; for I can button the cape over the lower part of my face. Don't I look deviliſhly down and concerned, Landlord?

I never ſaw a gentleman with a better natured look. 'Tis pity you ſhou'd have ſuch trials, Sir,

I muſt be very unhappy, no doubt of it, Landlord. And yet I am a little pleaſed, you muſt needs think, that I have found her out before any great inconvenience has ariſen to her. However, if I cannot break her of theſe freaks, ſhe'll break my heart; for I do love her with all her failings.

The good woman, who was within hearing of all this, pitied me much.

Pray, your Honour, ſaid ſhe, if I may be ſo bold, was Madam ever a mamma?

No!—and I ſighed—We have been but a little while married; and, as I may ſay to *you*, it is her own fault that ſhe is not in that way [Not a word of a lye in this, Jack]. But to tell you truth, Madam, ſhe may be compared to the dog in the manger—

I underſtand you, Sir [ſimpering]—She is but young, Sir. I have heard of one or two ſuch ſkittiſh

young

young Ladies, in my time, Sir—But when Madam is in that way, I dare say, as she loves you (and it would be strange if she did not!) all this will be over, and she may make the best of wives.

That's all my hope.

She is as fine a Lady as I ever beheld. I hope, Sir, you won't be too severe. She'll get over all these freaks, if once she be a mamma, I warrant.

I can't be severe to her; she knows that. The moment I see her, all resentment is over with me, if she give me but one kind look.

All this time, I was adjusting my horseman's coat, and Will. was putting in the ties of my wig (*a*), and buttoning the cape over my chin.

I asked the gentlewoman for a little powder. She brought me a powder box, and I slightly shook the puff over my hat, and flapt one side of it, tho' the lace looked a little too gay for my covering; and slouching it over my eyes, shall I be known, think you, Madam?

Your Honour is so expert, Sir!—I wish, if I may be so bold, your Lady has not some *cause* to be jealous. But it will be impossible, if you keep your laced cloaths covered, that any body should know you in that dress to be the same gentleman—Except they find you out by your clocked stockens.

Well observed—Can't you, Landlord, lend or sell me a pair of stockens, that will draw over these? I can cut off the feet, if they won't go into my shoes.

He could let me have a pair of coarse, but clean, stirrup-stockens, if I pleased.

The best in the world for the purpose.

He fetch'd them. Will. drew them on; and my legs then made a good gouty appearance.

The good woman, smiling, wished me success: and so did the landlord: And as thou knowest that I am not a bad mimic, I took a cane, which I borrowed of

(a) The fashionable Wigs at that time.

the landlord, and ſtooped in the ſhoulders to a quarter of a foot of leſs height, and ſtumped away croſs to the Bowling-green, to practice a little the hobbling gaite of a gouty man. The landlady whiſpered her huſband, as Will. tells me, He's a good one, I warrant him—I dare-ſay the fault lies not at all of one ſide. While mine hoſt replied, that I was ſo lively and ſo good-natured a gentleman, that he did not know who could be angry with me, do what I would. A ſenſible fellow!—I wiſh my charmer were of the ſame opinion.

And now I am going to try, if I can't agree with goody Moore for lodgings and other conveniences for my ſick wife.

'Wife, Lovelace?' methinks thou interrogateſt.

Yes, *wife*, for who knows what cautions the dear Fugitive may have given in apprehenſion of me?

'But has goody Moore any other lodgings to let?'

Yes, yes; I have taken care of that; and find that ſhe has juſt ſuch conveniencies as I want. And I know that my wife will like them. For, altho' married, I can do every-thing I pleaſe; and that's a bold word, you know. But had ſhe only a garret to let, I would have liked it; and been a poor author afraid of arreſts, and made that my place of refuge; yet would have made ſhift to pay beforehand for what I had. I can ſuit myſelf to any condition, that's my comfort.

* * * * * *

THE widow Moore return'd! ſay you—Down, down, flutterer?—This impertinent heart is more troubleſome to me than my conſcience, I think.—I ſhall be obliged to hoarſen my voice, and roughen my character, to keep up with its puppily dancings.

But let me ſee, Shall I be angry or pleaſed, when I am admitted to my Beloved's preſence?

Angry to be ſure.—Has ſhe not broken her word with me?—At a time too when I was meditating to do her grateful juſtice?—And is not breach of word a dreadful crime in good folks? I have ever been for

forming my judgment of the nature of things and actions, not so much from what they are in themselves, as from the character of the actors. Thus it would be as odd a thing in such as we to *keep* our words with a woman, as it would be wicked in her to *break* hers to us.

Seest thou not, that this unseasonable gravity is admitted to quell the palpitations of this unmanageable heart? But still it will go on with its boundings. I'll try as I ride in my chariot to *tranquillize*.

'Ride, Bob! so little a way?'

Yes, ride, Jack; for am I not lame? And will it not look well to have a lodger who keeps his chariot? What widow, what servant, asks questions of a man with an equipage?

My coachman, as well as my other servant, is under Will's tuition.

Never was there such a hideous rascal as he has made himself. The devil only and his *other* master can know him. They both have set their marks upon him. As to my Honour's mark, it will never be out of his *damn'd wide mothe*, as he calls it. For the dog will be hanged before he can lose the rest of his teeth by age.

I am gone.

LETTER VIII.

Mr. Lovelace, *To* John Belford, *Esq.*

Hamstead, Friday Night, June 9.

NOW, Belford, for the Narrative of narratives. I will continue it, as I have opportunity; and that so dexterously, that if I break off twenty times, thou shalt not discern where I piece my thread.

Although grievously afflicted with the gout, I alighted out of my chariot (leaning very hard on my cane with one hand, and on my new servant's shoulder with the other) the same instant almost that he had knocked

knocked at the door, that I might be ſure of admiſſion into the houſe.

I took care to button my great coat about me, and to cover with it even the pummel of my ſword; it being a little too gay for my years. I knew not what occaſion I might have for my ſword. I ſtooped forward; blinked with my eyes to conceal their luſtre [No vanity in ſaying that, Jack]; my chin wrapt up for the tooth-ach; my ſlouched, laced hat, and ſo much of my wig as was viſible, giving me, all together, the appearance of an antiquated beau.

My wife, I reſolved beforehand, ſhould have a complication of diſorders.

The maid came to the door. I aſked for her miſtreſs. She ſhewed me into one of the parlours; and I ſat down with a gouty Oh!—

Enter Goody Moore.

Your ſervant, Madam—But you muſt excuſe me; I cannot well ſtand—I find by the bill at the door, that you have lodgings to let [Mumbling my words as if, like my man Will, I had loſt ſome of my fore-teeth]: Be pleaſed to inform me what they are; for I like your ſituation—And I will tell you my family—I have a wife, a good old woman—Older than myſelf, by the way, a pretty deal. She is in a bad ſtate of health, and is adviſed into the Hamſtead air. She will have two maid ſervants and a footman. The coach or chariot (I ſhall not have them up both together) we can put up any-where, and the coachman will be with his horſes.

When, Sir, ſhall you want to come in?

I will take them from this very day; and, if convenient, will bring my wife in the afternoon.

Perhaps, Sir, you would board, as well as lodge?

That as you pleaſe. It will ſave me the trouble of bringing my cook, if we do. And I ſuppoſe you have ſervants who know how to dreſs a couple of

diſhes. My wife muſt eat plain food, and I don't love kick-ſhaws.

We have a ſingle Lady, who will be gone in two or three days. She has one of the beſt apartments: That will then be at liberty.

You have one or two good ones mean time, I preſume, Madam, juſt to receive my wife; for we have loſt time — Theſe damn'd phyſicians — Excuſe me, Madam, I am not uſed to curſe; but it is owing to the love I have for my wife — They have kept her in hand, till they are aſhamed to take more fees, and now adviſe her to the air. I wiſh we had ſent her hither at firſt. But we muſt now make the beſt of it.

Excuſe me, Madam [for ſhe looked hard at me] that I am muffled up in this warm weather. I am but too ſenſible, that I have left my chamber ſooner than I ought, and perhaps ſhall have a return of my gout for it. I came out thus muffled up with a dreadful pain in my jaws; an ague in them, I believe. But my poor dear will not be ſatisfied with any-body's care but mine. And, as I told you, we have loſt time.

You ſhall ſee what accommodations I have, if you pleaſe, Sir. But I doubt you are too lame to walk upſtairs.

I can make ſhift to hobble up now I have reſted a little. I'll juſt look upon the apartment my wife is to have. Any-thing may do for the ſervants: And as you ſeem to be a good ſort of gentlewoman, I ſhan't ſtand for a price, and will pay well beſides for the trouble I ſhall give.

She led the way; and I, helping myſelf by the baniſters, made ſhift to get up with leſs fatigue than I expected from ancles ſo weak. But oh! Jack, what was Sixtus the Vth's artful depreſſion of his natural powers to mine, when, as the half-dead Montalto, he gaped for the pretendedly unſought Pontificate, and the moment he was choſen leapt upon the prancing beaſt, which it was thought by the amazed conclave

he

he was not able to mount without help of chairs and men? Never were there a more joyous heart and lighter heels than mine, joined together; yet both denied their functions; the one fluttering in secret, ready to burst its bars for relief-ful expression, the others obliged to an hobbling motion; when, unrestrained, they would, in their master's imagination, have mounted him to the lunar world without the help of a ladder.

There were three rooms on a floor: two of them handsome; and the third, she said, still handsomer; but the Lady was in it.

I saw, I saw she was! for as I hobbled up, crying out upon my weak ancles, in the hoarse mumbling voice I had assumed, I beheld a little piece of her as she just cast an eye (with the door a-jar, as they call it) to observe who was coming up; and, seeing such an old clumsy fellow, great coated in weather so warm, slouched, and muffled up, she withdrew, shutting the door without any emotion. But it was not so with me; for thou canst not imagine how my heart danced to my mouth, at the very glimpse of her; so that I was afraid the thump, thump thumping villain, which had so lately thumped as much to no purpose, would have choaked me.

I liked the lodging well; and the more as she said the third room was still handsomer. I must sit down Madam [and chose the darkest part of the room]: Won't you take a seat yourself?—No price shall part us—But I will leave the terms to you and my wife, if you please: And also whether for board or not. Only please to take This for earnest, putting a guinea into her hand—And one thing I will say; My poor wife loves money; but is not an ill-natured woman. She was a great fortune to me: But, as the real Estate goes away at her death, I would fain preserve her for that reason, as well as for the love I bear her as an honest man. But if she makes too close a bargain with

you, tell *me*; and unknown to *her*, I will make it up. This is my conſtant way: She loves to have her pen'worths; and I would not have her vexed or made uneaſy on any account.

She ſaid, I was a very conſiderate gentleman; and, upon the condition I had mentioned, ſhe was content to leave the terms to my Lady.

But, Madam, cannot a-body juſt peep into the other apartment; that I may be more particular to my wife in the furniture of it?

The Lady deſires to be private, Sir—But—And was going to aſk her leave.

I caught hold of her arm—However, ſtay, ſtay, Madam: It mayn't be proper, if the Lady loves to be private. Don't let me intrude upon the Lady—

No intruſion, Sir, I dare ſay: The Lady is good-humoured. She will be ſo kind as to ſtep down into the parlour, I dare ſay. As ſhe ſtays ſo little a while, I am ſure ſhe will not wiſh to ſtand in my way.

No, Madam, that's true, if ſhe be good-humoured, as you ſay—Has ſhe been with you long, Madam?

She came but yeſterday, Sir—

I believe I juſt now ſaw the glimpſe of her. She ſeems to be an elderly Lady.

No, Sir! you're miſtaken. She's a young Lady; and one of the handſomeſt I ever ſaw.

Cot ſo, I beg her pardon! Not but that I ſhould have liked her the better, were ſhe to ſtay longer, if ſhe had been elderly. I have a ſtrange taſte, Madam, you'll ſay; but I really, for my wife's ſake, love every elderly woman. Indeed I ever thought Age was to be reverenced, which made me (taking the fortune into the ſcale too, *that* I own) make my addreſſes to my preſent dear.

Very good of you, Sir, to reſpect age: We all hope to live to be old.

Right, Madam.—But you ſay the lady is beautiful. Now you muſt know, that tho' I chuſe to converſe

with

with the elderly, yet I love to ſee a beautiful young woman, juſt as I love to ſee fine flowers in a garden. There's no caſting an eye upon her, is there? without her notice? For in this dreſs, and thus muffled up about my jaws, I ſhould not care to be ſeen any more than ſhe, let her love privacy as much as ſhe will.

I will go aſk if I may ſhew a gentleman the apartment, Sir; and, as you are a married gentleman, and not *over* young, ſhe'll perhaps make the leſs ſcruple.

Then, like me, ſhe loves elderly folks beſt perhaps. But it may be ſhe has ſuffered by young ones!

I fancy ſhe has, Sir, or is afraid ſhe ſhall. She deſired to be very private; and if by deſcription enquired after, to be denied.

Thou art true woman, goody Moore, thought I.

Good lack—Good lack!—What may be her Story then, I pray?

She is pretty reſerved in her Story; but, to tell you my thoughts, I believe *Love* is in the caſe: She is always in tears, and does not much care for company.

Nay, Madam, it becomes not me to dive into Ladies ſecrets; I want not to pry into other people's affairs. But, pray, how does ſhe employ herſelf?—Yet ſhe came but yeſterday; ſo you can't tell.

Writing continually, Sir.

Theſe women, Jack, when you aſk them queſtions by way of information, don't care to be ignorant of any thing.

Nay, excuſe me, Madam, I am very far from being an inquiſitive man. But if her caſe be difficult, and not merely *Love*, as ſhe is a friend of yours, I would give her my advice.

Then you are a Lawyer, Sir—

Why, indeed, Madam, I was ſome time at the

Bar; but I have long left practice; yet am much consulted by my friends in difficult points. In a pauper case I frequently *give* money; but never *take* any from the richeſt.

You are a very good gentleman, then, Sir.

Ay, Madam, we cannot live always here; and we ought to do what good we can—But I hate to appear officious. If the Lady ſtay any time, and think fit, upon better acquaintance, to let me into her caſe, it may be a happy day for her, if I find it a juſt one; for, you muſt know, that when I was at the Bar, I never was ſuch a ſad fellow as to undertake, for the ſake of a paltry fee, to make white black, and black white; for what would that have been, but to endeavour to eſtabliſh iniquity by quirks, while I robbed the innocent?

You are an excellent gentleman, Sir: I wiſh [and then ſhe ſighed] I had had the happineſs to know there was ſuch a Lawyer in the world; and to have been acquainted with him.

Come, come, Mrs. Moore, I think your name is, it may not be too late—When you and I are better acquainted, I may help *you* perhaps.—But mention nothing of this to the Lady; for, as I ſaid, I hate to appear officious.

This prohibition I knew, if goody Moore anſwered the ſpecimen ſhe had given of her womanhood, would make her take the firſt opportunity to tell, were it to be neceſſary to my purpoſe that ſhe ſhould.

I appeared, upon the whole, ſo indifferent about ſeeing the Room, or the Lady, that the good woman was the more eager I ſhould ſee both. And the rather, as I, to ſtimulate her, declared, that there was more required in my eye to merit the character of a handſome woman, than moſt people thought neceſſary; and that I had never ſeen ſix truly lovely women in my life.

To

To be brief, ſhe went in; and after a little while came out again. The Lady, Sir, is retired to her cloſet So you may go in and look at the room.

Then how my heart began again to play its pug's tricks!

I hobbled in, and ſtumped about, and liked it very much; and was ſure my wife would. I begged excuſe for ſitting down, and aſked, Who was the Miniſter of the place? If he were a good preacher? Who preached at the Chapel? And if *he* were a good preacher, and good *liver* too, Madam—I muſt enquire after *That*: For I love, I muſt needs ſay, that the Clergy ſhould practiſe what they preach.

Very right, Sir; but that is not ſo often the caſe, as were to be wiſhed.

More's the pity, Madam, But I have a great veneration for the Clergy in general. It is more a ſatire upon Human nature, than upon the Cloth, if we ſuppoſe thoſe who have the *beſt* opportunities to do good, leſs perfect than other people. For my part, I don't love *profeſſional* any more than *national* reflections.—But I keep the Lady in her cloſet. My gout makes me rude.

Then up from my ſeat ſtumped I—What do you call theſe window-curtains, Madam?

Stuff-damaſk, Sir.

It looks mighty well, truly. I like it better than ſilk. It is warmer to be ſure, and much fitter for lodgings in the country; eſpecially for people in years. The bed is in a pretty taſte.

It is neat and clean, Sir: That's all we pretend to.

Ay, mighty well—Very well—A ſilk camblet, I think—Very well, truly!—I am ſure my wife will like it. But we would not turn the Lady out of her lodgings for the world. The other two apartments will do for us at the preſent.

Then ſtumping towards the cloſet, over the door of

which hung a picture—What picture is that—Oh! I see: A St. Cæcilia!

A common print, Sir!

Pretty well, pretty well! It is after an Italian master.—I would not for the world turn the Lady out of her apartment. We can make shift with the other two, repeated I, louder still: But yet mumblingly hoarse: for I had as great a regard to uniformity in accent, as to my words.

O Belford! to be so near my angel, think what a painful constraint I was under.

I was resolved to fetch her out, if possible: And pretending to be going—You can't agree as to any *time*, Mrs. Moore, when we can have this third room, can you?—Not that [whispered I, loud enough to be heard in the next room; Not that] I would incommode the Lady: But I would tell my Wife *when* abouts—And women, you know, Mrs. Moore, love to have every-thing before them of this nature.

Mrs. Moore, said my Charmer [And never did her voice sound so harmonious to me: Oh how my heart bounded again! It even talked to me, in a manner; for I thought I *heard*, as well as felt, its unruly flutters; and every vein about me seemed a pulse; Mrs. Moore] you may acquaint the gentleman, that I shall stay here only for two or three days at most, till I receive an Answer to a Letter I have written into the country; and rather than be your hindrance, I will take up with any apartment a pair of stairs higher.

Not for the world!—Not for the world, young Lady! cried I.—My wife, well as I love her, should lie in a garret, rather than put such a considerate Lady as you seem to be, to the least inconveniency.

She opened not the door yet; and I said, But since you have so much goodness, Madam, if I could but just look into the closet as I stand, I could tell my wife whether it is large enough to hold a cabinet she much values, and will have with her where-ever she goes.

Then

Then my Charmer opened the door, and blazed upon me, as it were, in a flood of light, like what one might imagine would ſtrike a man, who, born blind, had by ſome propitious power been bleſſed with his ſight, all at once, in a meridian Sun.

Upon my Soul, I never was ſo ſtrangely affected before. I had much ado to forbear diſcovering myſelf that inſtant: But, heſitatingly, and in great diſorder, I ſaid, looking into the cloſet, and around it, There is room, I ſee, for my wife's Cabinet; and it has many jewels in it of high price; but, upon my Soul [for I could not forbear ſwearing, like a puppy:—Habit is a curſed thing Jack—] Nothing ſo valuable as a Lady I ſee, can be brought into it.

She ſtarted, and looked at me with terror. The truth of the compliment, as far as I know, had taken diſſimulation from my accent.

I ſaw it was impoſſible to conceal myſelf longer from her, any more than (from the violent impulſes of my paſſion) to forbear manifeſting myſelf. I unbuttoned therefore my cape, I pulled off my flapt flouched hat; I threw open my great coat, and, like the devil in Milton [an odd compariſon tho'!]

I ſtarted up in my own form divine,
Touch'd by the beam of her celeſtial eye,
More potent than Ithuriel's ſpear!—

Now, Belford, for a ſimilitude—Now for a likeneſs to illuſtrate the ſurpriſing ſcene, and the effect it had upon my charmer, and the gentlewoman!—But nothing *was* like it, or equal to it. The plain fact can only deſcribe it, and ſet it off—Thus then take it.

She no ſooner ſaw who it was, than ſhe gave three violent ſcreams; and, before I could catch her in my arms (as I was about to do the moment I diſcovered myſelf) down ſhe ſunk at my feet, in a fit; which made me curſe my indiſcretion for ſo ſuddenly, and with ſo much emotion, revealing myſelf.

The gentlewoman, ſeeing ſo ſtrange an alteration in my perſon, and features, and voice, and dreſs, cried out, Murder, help! Murder, help! by turns, for half a dozen times running. This alarmed the houſe, and up ran two ſervant-maids, and *my* ſervant after them. I cried out for water and hartſhorn, and every one flew a different way, one of the maids as faſt down as ſhe came up; while the gentlewoman ran out of one room into another, and by turns up and down the apartment we were in, without meaning or end, wringing her fooliſh hands, and not knowing what ſhe did.

Up then came running a gentleman and his ſiſter, fetched, and brought in by the maid, who had run down, and having let in a curſed crabbed old wretch, hobbling with his gout, and mumbling with his hoarſe-broken toothed voice, who was metamorphoſed all at once into a lively gay young fellow, with a clear accent, and all his teeth, ſhe would have it, that I was neither more nor leſs than the devil, and could not keep her eye from my foot; expecting, no doubt, every minute to ſee it diſcover itſelf to be cloven.

For my part, I was ſo intent upon reſtoring my angel, that I regarded nobody elſe. And at laſt, ſhe ſlowly recovering motion, with bitter ſighs and ſobs (only the whites of her eyes however appearing for ſome moments) I called upon her in the tendereſt accent, as I kneeled by her, my arm ſupporting her head; My Angel! My Charmer! My Clariſſa; look upon me, my deareſt Life!—I am not angry with you;—I will forgive you, my beſt Beloved;—

The gentleman and his ſiſter knew not what to make of all this: And the leſs, when my Fair-one, recovering her ſight, ſnatched another look at me; and then again groaned, and fainted away.

I threw up the cloſet-ſaſh for air, and then left her to the care of the young gentlewoman, the ſame notable Miſs Rawlins, who I had heard of at the Flaſk;

and

and to that of Mrs. Moore; who by this time had recovered herſelf; and then retiring to one corner of the room, I made my ſervant pull off my gouty ſtockens, bruſh my hat, and loop it up into the uſual ſmart cock.

I then ſtept to the cloſet to Mr. Rawlins, whom, in the general confuſion, I had not much minded before.—Sir, ſaid I, you have an uncommon ſcene before you. The Lady is my Wife, and no gentleman's preſence is neceſſary here but my own.

I beg pardon, Sir; *If* the Lady be your Wife, I have no buſineſs here. *But*, Sir, by her concern at ſeeing you—

Pray, Sir, none of your *if's* and *but's*, I beſeech you: Nor *your* concern about the *Lady*'s concern. You are a very unqualified judge in this cauſe; and I beg of you, Sir, to oblige me with your abſence. The women only are proper to be preſent on this occaſion, added I; and I think myſelf obliged to them for their care and kind aſſiſtance.

'Tis well he made not another word: For I found my choler begin to riſe. I could not bear, that the fineſt neck, and arms, and foot, in the world, ſhould be expoſed to the eyes of any man living but mine.

I withdrew once more from the cloſet, finding her beginning to recover, leſt the ſight of me too ſoon, ſhould throw her back again.

The firſt words ſhe ſaid, looking round her with great emotion, were, O hide me, hide me! Is he gone!—O hide me!—Is he gone!

Sir, ſaid Miſs Rawlins, coming to me with an air both peremptory and aſſured, This is ſome ſurpriſing caſe. The Lady cannot bear the ſight of you. What you have done is beſt known to yourſelf. But another ſuch fit will probably be her laſt. It would be but kind therefore for you to retire.

It behoved me to have ſo notable a perſon of my party; and the rather as I had diſobliged her impertinent Brother. The

The dear creature, ſaid I, may *well* be concerned to ſee me. If *you*, Madam, had a huſband who loved you as I love her, you would not, I am confident, fly from him, and expoſe yourſelf to hazards, as ſhe does whenever he has not all her way—And yet with a mind not capable of intentional evil—But Mother-ſpoilt!—This is her fault, and all her fault: And the more inexcuſable it is, as I am the man of her choice, and have reaſon to think ſhe loves me above all the men in the world.

Here, Jack, was a Story to ſupport to the Lady; face to face too [*a*]!

[*a*] And here, Belford, leſt thou, thro' inattention, ſhould be ſurpriſed at my aſſurance, let me remind thee (and that, thus, by way of marginal obſervation, that I may not break in upon my Narrative) that this my Intrepidity was but a conſequence of the meaſures I had previouſly concerted (as I have from time to time acquainted thee) in apprehenſion of ſuch an event as has fallen out. For had not the dear creature already paſſed for my Wife, before no leſs than four worthy gentlemen of family and fortune *? and before Mrs. Sinclair, and her houſhold, and Miſs Partington? And had ſhe not agreed to her Uncle's expedient, that ſhe *ſhould* paſs for ſuch, from the time of Mr. Hickman's application to that Uncle †; and that the worthy Capt. Tomlinſon ſhould be allowed to propagate that belief; as he had actually reported to two families (*they poſſibly to more*); purpoſely that it might come to the ears of James Harlowe; and ſerve for a foundation for Uncle John to build his Reconciliation-ſcheme upon ‡? And canſt thou think, that nothing was meant by all this contrivance? And that I am not ſtill *further* prepared to ſupport my Story?

Indeed, I little thought, at the time that I formed theſe precautionary Schemes, that ſhe would ever have been able, if *willing*, to get out of my hands. All that I hoped I ſhould have occaſion to have recourſe to them for, was only, in caſe I ſhould have the courage to make the grand attempt, and ſhould ſucceed in it, to bring the dear creature [and *this out of tenderneſs to her*, for what attention did I ever yet pay to the grief, the execrations, the tears of a woman I had triumphed over?]; to bear me in her ſight; to expoſtulate with me, to be pacified by my pleas, and by my own future hopes, founded upon the Reconciliatory-project, upon my reiterated vows, and upon the Captain's aſſurances - Since in that caſe, to forgive me, to have gone on with me, *for a week*, would have been to forgive me, to have gone on with me *for ever*. And that had my eligible Life of Honour taken place; her trials would all have been then over; and ſhe would have known nothing but gratitude, love, and joy, to the end of one of our lives. For never would I, never could I, have abandoned ſuch an admirable creature as this. Thou knoweſt, I never was a ſordid villain to any of her inferiors—Her *inferiors*, I may ſay—For who is not her inferior?

* See Vol. III. Letter lxii. towards the concluſion. † See Vol. IV. Letter iv. ‡ Ibid.

You *ſpeak* like a gentleman; you *look* like a gentleman, ſaid Miſs Rawlins—But, Sir, this is a ſtrange caſe; the Lady ſeems to dread the ſight of you.

No wonder, Madam; taking her a little on one ſide nearer to Mrs. Moore. I have three times already forgiven the dear creature—But this *jealouſy!*—There is a ſpice of *that* in it—and of *phrenſy* too [whiſpered I, that it might have the face of a ſecret, and of conſequence the more engage their attention]—But our Story is too long—

I then made a motion to go to my Beloved. But they deſired that I would walk into the next room; and they would endeavour to prevail upon her to lie down.

I begged that they would not ſuffer her to talk; for that ſhe was accuſtomed to Fits, and when in this way, would talk of any-thing that came uppermoſt: And the more ſhe was ſuffered to run on, the worſe ſhe was; and if not kept quiet, would fall into ravenings: which might poſſibly hold her a week.

They promiſed to keep her quiet; and I withdrew into the next room: ordering every one down but Mrs. Moore and Miſs Rawlins.

She was full of exclamations. Unhappy creature! miſerable! ruined! and undone! ſhe called herſelf; wrung her hands, and begged they would aſſiſt her to eſcape from the terrible evils ſhe ſhould otherwiſe be made to ſuffer.

They preached patience and quietneſs to her; and would have had her to lie down: But ſhe refuſed; ſinking, however, into an eaſy chair; for ſhe trembled ſo, ſhe could not ſtand.

By this time, I hoped, that ſhe was enough recovered to bear a preſence, that it behoved me to make her bear; and fearing ſhe would throw out ſomething in her exclamations, that would ſtill more diſconcert me, I went into the room again.

O there he is! ſaid ſhe, and threw her apron over her

her face—I cannot ſee him!—I cannot look upon him!—Begone, begone! touch me not!—

For I took her ſtruggling hand, beſeeching her to be pacified; and aſſuring her, that I would make all up with her upon her own terms and wiſhes.

Baſe man! ſaid the violent Lady, I have no wiſhes, but never to behold you more! Why muſt I be thus purſued and haunted? Have you not made me miſerable enough already?—Deſpoiled of all ſuccour and help, and of every friend, I am contented to be poor, low, and miſerable, ſo I may be free from your perſecutions.

Miſs Rawlins ſtared at me [A confident ſlut this Miſs Rawlins, thought I]: So did Mrs. Moore. I told you ſo! whiſpering ſaid I, turning to the women; ſhaking my head with a face of great concern and pity; and then to my Charmer, My dear creature, how you rave! You will not eaſily recover from the effects of this violence. Have patience, my Love. Be pacified; and we will coolly talk this matter over: For you expoſe yourſelf, as well as me: Theſe Ladies will certainly think you have fallen among robbers, and that I am the chief of them.

So you are! ſo you are! ſtamping, her face ſtill covered [*She thought of Wedneſday night, no doubt*]; and, ſighing as if her heart were breaking, ſhe put her hand to her forehead—I ſhall be quite diſtracted!

I will not, my deareſt Love, uncover your face. You ſhall *not* look upon me, ſince I am ſo odious to you. But this is a violence I never thought you capable of.

And I would have preſſed her hand, as I held it, with my lips; but ſhe drew it from me with indignation.

Unhand me, Sir, ſaid ſhe. I will not be touched by you. Leave me to my fate. What right, what title, have you to perſecute me thus?

What right, what title, my dear!—But this is not a time

a time—I have a Letter from Captain Tomlinſon—Here it is—offering it to her—

I will receive nothing from your hands—Tell me not of Captain Tomlinſon—Tell me not of any body—You have no *right* to invade me thus—Once more leave me to my fate—Have you not made me miſerable enough?

I touched a delicate ſtring, on purpoſe to ſet her in ſuch a paſſion before the women, as might confirm the intimation I had given of a phrenſical diſorder.

What a turn is here!—Lately ſo happy—Nothing wanting but a Reconciliation between you and your friends!—That reconciliation in ſuch a happy train—Shall ſo *ſlight*, ſo *accidental* an occaſion be ſuffered to overturn all our happineſs?

She ſtarted up with a trembling impatience, her apron falling from her indignant face—Now, ſaid ſhe, that thou *dareſt* to call the occaſion *ſlight* and *accidental*, and that I am happily out of thy vile hands, and out of a houſe I have reaſon to believe *as* vile, traitor and wretch that thou art, I will venture to caſt an eye upon thee—And O that it were in my power, in mercy to my Sex, to look thee firſt into ſhame and remorſe, and then into death!

This violent Tragedy-ſpeech, and the high manner in which ſhe uttered it, had it deſired effect. I looked upon the women, and upon her by turns, with a pitying eye; and they ſhook their wiſe heads, and beſought *me* to retire, and *her* to lie down to compoſe herſelf.

This hurricane, like other hurricanes, was preſently allayed by a ſhower. She threw herſelf once more into her armed chair, and begged pardon of the women for her paſſionate exceſs; but not of me: Yet I was in hopes, that when compliments were ſtirring, I ſhould have come in for a ſhare.

Indeed, Ladies, ſaid I [with aſſurance enough, thou'lt ſay] this violence is not natural to my Beloved's temper—Miſapprehenſion.— Miſ-

—Miſapprehenſion, wretch!—And want I excuſes from thee!

By what a ſcorn was every lovely feature agitated!

Then turning her face from me, I have not patience, O thou guileful betrayer, to look upon thee! Begone! Begone! With a face ſo unbluſhing, how dareſt thou appear in my preſence?

I thought then, that the character of a huſband obliged me to be angry.

You may one day, Madam, repent this treatment:—By my Soul you may. You know I have not deſerved it of you—You *know*—I have not.

—Do I know you have not?—Wretch! Do I know—

You do, Madam—And never did man of my figure and conſideration [I thought it was proper to throw that in] meet with ſuch treatment—

She lifted up her hands: Indignation kept her ſilent.

But all is of a piece with the charge you bring againſt me of *deſpoiling you of all ſuccour and help*, of making you *poor* and *low*, and with other unprecedented language. I will only ſay, before theſe two gentlewomen, that ſince it *muſt* be ſo, and ſince your former eſteem for me is turned into ſo riveted an averſion, I will ſoon, *very* ſoon, make you entirely eaſy. I *will* be gone:—I *will* leave you to *your own fate*, as you call it; and may That be happy!—Only, that I may not appear to be a ſpoiler, a robber indeed, let me know whither I ſhall ſend your apparel, and every thing that belongs to you, and I will ſend it.

Send it to this place; and aſſure me, that you will never moleſt me more; never more come near me; and that is all I aſk of you.

I *will* do ſo, Madam, ſaid I, with a dejected air. But did I ever think I ſhould be ſo indifferent to you?—However, you muſt permit me to inſiſt on your reading this Letter; and on your ſeeing Capt. Tomlinſon,

linſon, and hearing what he has to ſay from your Uncle. He will be here by-and-by.

Don't trifle with me, ſaid ſhe, in an imperious tone—Do as you offer. I will not receive any Letter from your hands. If I ſee Captain Tomlinſon, it ſhall be on his *own* account; not on *yours*. You tell me you will ſend me my apparel: If you would have me believe any thing you ſay, let this be the Teſt of your Sincerity—Leave me *now*, and ſend my things.

The women ſtared. They did nothing but ſtare; and appeared to be more and more at a loſs what to make of the matter between us.

I pretended to be going from her in a pet; But when I had got to the door, I turned back; and, as if I had recollected myſelf, One word more, my deareſt creature!—Charming even in your anger!—O my fond ſoul! ſaid I, turning half-round, and pulling out my handkerchief.

I believe, Jack, my eyes did gliſten a little. I have no doubt but they did. The women pitied me. Honeſt ſouls! They ſhewed, that they had each of them a handkerchief as well as I. So, haſt thou not obſerved (to give a familiar illuſtration) every man in a company of a dozen, or more, obligingly pull out his watch, when ſome one has aſked, What's o'clock?—As each man of a like number, if one talks of his Beard, will fall to ſtroking his chin with his four fingers and thumb.

One word only, Madam, repeated I (as ſoon as my voice had recovered its tone): I have repreſented to Captain Tomlinſon, in the moſt favourable light the cauſe of our preſent miſunderſtanding. You know what your Uncle inſiſts upon; and with which you have acquieſced. The Letter in my hand [and again I offered it to her] will acquaint you with what you have to apprehend from your Brother's active malice.

She was going to ſpeak in a high accent, putting

the

the Letter from her, with an open palm—Nay, hear me out, Madam—The Captain, you know, has reported our *marriage* to two different perſons. It is come to your Brother's ears. My own relations have alſo heard of it. Letters were brought me from town this morning, from Lady Betty Lawrence and Miſs Montague. Here they are [I pulled them out of my pocket, and offered them to her, with That of the Captain; but ſhe held back her ſtill open palm, that ſhe might not receive them]. Reflect, Madam, I beſeech you reflect, upon the fatal conſequences with which this your high reſentment may be attended.

Ever ſince I knew you, ſaid ſhe, I have been in a wilderneſs of doubt and error. I bleſs God that I am out of your hands. I will tranſact for myſelf what relates to myſelf. I diſmiſs all your ſolicitude for me. Am I not my own miſtreſs!—Have you any title—

The women ſtared [The devil ſtare ye, thought I! Can ye do nothing but ſtare?] It was high time to ſtop her here.

I raiſed my voice to drown her's—You uſed, my deareſt creature, to have a tender and apprehenſive heart—Your never had ſo much reaſon for ſuch a one as now.

Let me judge for myſelf, upon what I ſhall *ſee*, not upon what I ſhall *hear*—Do you think I ſhall never—

I dreaded her going on—I *muſt* be heard, Madam, raiſing my voice ſtill higher. You *muſt* let me read one paragragh or two of This Letter to you, if you will not read it yourſelf—

Begone from me, Man!—Begone from me with thy Letters! What pretence haſt thou for tormenting me thus—What right—What title—

Deareſt creature, what queſtions you aſk! Queſtions that you can as well anſwer yourſelf—

I *can*, I *will*—And *thus* I anſwer them—

Still

Still louder raiſed I my voice. She was overborne. Sweet Soul! It would be hard, thought I [and yet I was very angry with her] if ſuch a ſpirit as thine cannot be brought to yield to ſuch a one as mine!

I lowered my voice on her ſilence. All gentle, all *intreative*, my accent: My head bowed; one hand held out; the other on my honeſt heart:—For Heaven's ſake, my deareſt creature, reſolve to ſee Captain Tomlinſon with temper. He would have come along with me: But I was willing to try to ſoften your mind firſt on this fatal miſapprehenſion; and This for the ſake of your own wiſhes: For what is it otherwiſe to me whether your friends are or are not reconciled to us? *Do I want any favour from them?*—For your own mind's ſake therefore, fruſtrate not Captain Tomlinſon's negotiation. That worthy gentleman will be here in the afternoon—Lady Betty will be in town with my Couſin Montague, in a day or two. They will be your viſitors. I beſeech you do not carry this miſunderſtanding ſo far, as that Lord M. and Lady Betty, and Lady Sarah, may know it. [*How conſiderable this made me look to the women!*] Lady Betty will not let you reſt till you conſent to accompany her to her own Seat—And to that Lady may you ſafely entruſt your cauſe.

Again, upon my pauſing a moment, ſhe was going to break out. I liked not the turn of her countenance, nor the tone of her voice—"And thinkeſt "thou, baſe wretch—" were the words ſhe *did* utter. I again raiſed my voice and drowned hers—*Baſe wretch*, Madam?—You know that I have not deſerved the violent names you have called me. Words ſo opprobrious! from a mind ſo gentle!—But this treatment is from *you*, Madam!—From *you*, whom I love more than my own Soul!—By that Soul, I ſwear that I do—[The women looked upon each other. They ſeemed pleaſed with my Ardor. Women, whether Wives, Maids, or Widows, love Ardors. Even Miſs

Howe, thou knoweſt, ſpeaks up for Ardors (*a*)]—Nevertheleſs, I muſt ſay, that you have carried matters too far for the occaſion. I ſee you hate me—

She was juſt going to ſpeak—If we are to *ſeparate for ever*, in a ſtrong and ſolemn voice, proceeded I, this Iſland ſhall not long be troubled with me. Mean time, only be pleaſed to give theſe Letters a peruſal, and conſider what is to be ſaid to your Uncle's friend, and what he is to ſay to your Uncle.—Any-thing will I come into (renounce me if you will) that ſhall make for *your* peace, and for the Reconciliation *your heart was ſo lately ſet upon*. But I humbly conceive, that it is neceſſary, that you ſhould come into better temper with me, were it but to give a favourable appearance to what *has paſſed*, and weight to any *future application* to your friends, in whatever way you ſhall think proper to make it.

I then put the Letters into her lap, and retired into the next apartment with a low bow, and a very ſolemn air.

I was ſoon followed by the two women. Mrs. Moore withdrew to give the fair Perverſe time to read them: Miſs Rawlins for the ſame reaſon; and becauſe ſhe was ſent for home.

The widow beſought her ſpeedy return. I joined in the ſame requeſt; and ſhe was ready enough to promiſe to oblige us.

I excuſed myſelf to Mrs. Moore for the diſguiſe I had appeared in at firſt, and for the Story I had invented. I told her, that I held myſelf obliged to ſatisfy her for the whole floor we were upon; and for an upper room for my ſervant; and that for a month certain.

She made many ſcruples, and begged ſhe might not be urged on this head, till ſhe had conſulted Miſs Rawlins.

(*a*) See Vol. IV. p. 78. 112.

I con-

I conſented; but told her, that ſhe had taken my Earneſt; and I hoped there was no room for diſpute.

Juſt then Miſs Rawlins returned, with an air of eager curioſity; and having been told, what had paſſed between Mrs. Moore and me, ſhe gave herſelf airs of office immediately: Which I humoured, plainly perceiving, that if I had *her* with me, I had the other.

She wiſhed, if there were time for it, and if it were not quite impertinent in her to deſire it, that I would give Mrs. Moore and her a brief Hiſtory of an affair, which, as ſhe ſaid, bore the face of Novelty, Myſtery, and Surprize: For ſometimes it looked to her as if we were married; at other times, that point appeared doubtful; and yet the Lady did not abſolutely deny it; but, upon the whole, thonght herſelf highly injured.

I ſaid, That ours was a very particular caſe: That were I to acquaint them with it, ſome part of it would hardly appear credible. But however, as they ſeemed to be perſons of diſcretion, I would give them a brief account of the whole; and this in ſo plain and ſincere a manner, that it ſhould clear up to their ſatisfaction every thing that had paſſed, or might hereafter paſs between us.

They ſat down by me, and threw every feature of their faces into attention. I was reſolved to go as near the truth as poſſible, leſt any thing ſhould drop from my Spouſe to impeach my veracity; and yet keep in view what paſſed at the Flaſk.

It is neceſſary, altho' thou knoweſt my whole Story, and a good deal of my views, that thou ſhouldſt be appriſed of the ſubſtance of what I told them.

'I gave them, in as conciſe a manner as I was able, 'the hiſtory of our families, fortunes, alliances, anti-'pathies; her Brother's and mine particularly. I 'averred the truth of our private Marriage.' The Captain's Letter, which I will incloſe, will give thee my reaſons for that. And beſides, the women might

have

have propoſed a Parſon to me by way of compromiſe.
'I told them the condition my Spouſe had made me
'ſwear to; and to which ſhe held me, in order, I
'ſaid, to induce me the ſooner to be reconciled to
'her Relations.'

'I owned, that this reſtraint made me ſometimes
'ready to *fly* out.' And Mrs Moore was ſo good as to declare, that *ſhe did not much wonder at it*.

Thou art a very good ſort of woman, Mrs. Moore, thought I.

As Miſs Howe has actually detected our mother; and might poſſibly find ſome way ſtill to acquaint her friend with her diſcoveries; I thought it proper to prepoſſeſs them in favour of Mrs. Sinclair and her two Nieces.

I ſaid, 'They were Gentlewomen born; that they
'had not bad hearts; that indeed my Spouſe did not
'love them; they having once jointly taken the li-
'berty to blame her for her over-niceneſs with regard
'to me. People, I ſaid, even *good* people, who knew
'themſelves to be guilty of a fault they had no incli-
'nation to mend, were too often leaſt patient, when
'told of it; as they could leſs bear than others, to
'be thought indifferently of.'

Too often the caſe, they owned.

'Mrs. Sinclair's houſe was a very handſome houſe,
'and fit to receive the firſt quality [True enough,
'Jack!]. Mrs. Sinclair was a woman very eaſy in
'her circumſtances: A Widow-gentlewoman—as
'*you*, Mrs. Moore, are. Lets Lodgings—as *you*,
'Mrs. Moore, do. Once had better proſpects—as
'*you*, Mrs. Moore, may have had: The Relict of
'Colonel Sinclair; You, Mrs. Moore, might know
'Colonel Sinclair—He had lodgings at Hamſtead.'

She had heard of the name.

'O, he was related to the beſt families in Scot-
'land: And his Widow is not to be reflected upon,
'becauſe ſhe lets Lodgings, you know, Mrs. Moore
"—You know, Miſs Rawlins.'

Very true, and, Very true: And they muſt needs ſay; it did not look quite ſo pretty in ſuch a Lady, as my Spouſe, to be ſo cenſorious.

A foundation here, thought I, to procure theſe womens help to get back the Fugitve, or their connivance at leaſt at my doing ſo; as well as for anticipating any future information from Miſs Howe.

I gave them a character of that Virago: And intimated, "that for a head to contrive miſchief, and a 'heart to execute it, ſhe had hardly her equal in her 'Sex.'

'To *this* Miſs Howe it was, Mrs. Moore ſaid, ſhe ſuppoſed, that my Spouſe was ſo deſirous to diſpatch a man and horſe, by day-dawn, with a Letter ſhe wrote before ſhe went to bed laſt night: propoſing to ſtay no longer than till ſhe had received an Anſwer to it.

The very ſame, ſaid I. I *knew* ſhe would have immediate recourſe to her. I ſhould have been but too happy, could I have prevented ſuch a Letter from paſſing, or ſo to have managed, as to have it given into Mrs. Howe's hands, inſtead of her daughter's. Women who had lived ſome time in the world knew *better*, than to encourage ſuch ſkittiſh pranks in young wives.

Let me juſt ſtop to tell thee, while it is in my head, that I have ſince given Will. his cue to find out where the man lives who is gone with the fair Fugitive's Letter; and, if poſſible, to ſee him on his return, before he ſees her.

I told the women, 'I deſpaired that it would ever 'be better with us while Miſs Howe had ſo ſtrange 'an aſcendancy over my Spouſe, and remained her-'ſelf *unmarried*; and until the Reconciliation with 'her friends could be effected; or a *ſtill* happier 'event—as I ſhould think it, who am the laſt male 'of my family; and which my fooliſh vow, and her 'rigour, had hitherto'—

Here I ſtopt, and looked modeſt, turning my dia-

BAYERISCHE STAATS- BIBLIOTHEK MUENCHEN

mond ring round my finger: While goody Moore looked mighty ſignificant, calling it a very particular caſe; and the Maiden fanned away, and primm'd and purſs'd, to ſhew, that what I ſaid needed no farther explanation.

'I told them the occaſion of our preſent difference: 'I avowed the reality of the Fire: But owned, that I 'would have made no ſcruple of breaking the unna- 'tural oath ſhe had bound me in (having an Huſ- 'band's right on my ſide) when ſhe was ſo acciden- 'tally frighted into my arms: And I blamed myſelf 'exceſſively, that I did not; ſince ſhe thought fit to 'carry her reſentment ſo high, and had the injuſtice 'to ſuppoſe the Fire to be a contrivance of mine."

Nay, for that matter, Mrs. Moore ſaid—as we were *married*, and *Madam* was ſo *odd*—Every Gentleman *wou'd not*—And ſtopt there Mrs. Moore.

'To ſuppoſe I ſhould have recourſe to ſuch a *poor* 'contrivance, ſaid I, when I ſaw the dear creature '*every hour*—' Was not this a bold put, Jack?

A moſt extraordinary caſe, truly! cried the Maiden; ſanning, yet coming in with her *Well-buts*; and her ſifting *Pray Sirs!* and her reſtraining *Enough Sirs!*—flying *from* the queſtion *to* the queſtion; her ſeat now-and-then uneaſy, for fear my *of want delicacy* ſhould hurt her abudant *modeſty*; and yet it was difficult to ſatisfy her *ſuper*-abundant *curioſity*.

'My Beloved's jealouſy [and jealouſy of itſelf, to 'female minds, accounts for a thouſand unaccount- 'ableneſſes] and the imputation of her half-phrenſy 'brought upon her by her Father's wicked curſe, and 'by the previous perſecutions ſhe had undergone from 'all her family, were what I dwelt upon, in order 'to provide againſt what might happen.'

In ſhort, 'I owned againſt myſelf moſt of the 'offences which I did not doubt but ſhe would charge 'me with in their hearing: And as every cauſe has 'a black and white ſide, I gave the worſt parts of

'our

'our Story the gentleſt turn. And when I had done, 'acquainted them with ſome of the contents of that 'Letter of Captain Tomlinſon which I had left 'with the Lady. I concluded with cautioning them 'to be guarded againſt the enquiries of James Har-'lowe, and of Captain Singleton, or of any Sailor-'looking men.'

This thou wilt ſee from the Letter itſelf was neceſſary to be done. Here therefore thou mayeſt read it. And a charming Letter to my purpoſe wilt thou find it to be, if thou giveſt the leaſt attention to its contents.

To ROBERT LOVELACE, *Eſq.*

Dear, Sir *Wedn. June 7.*

ALtho' I am obliged to be in town to morrow, or next day at fartheſt, yet I would not diſpenſe with writing to you, by *one of my ſervants* (whom I ſend up before me upon a particular occaſion) in order to advertiſe you, *that it is probable you will hear from ſome of your own relations on your* [*ſuppoſed* *] *nuptials.* One of the perſons (Mr. Lilburne by name) to whom I hinted my belief of your marriage, happens to be acquainted with Mr. Spurrier, Lady Betty Lawrance's Steward; and (not being under any reſtriction) mentioned it *to* Mr. Spurrier, and he to Lady Betty, as a thing certain: And this (tho' I have not the honour *to be perſonally known to her Ladyſhip)* brought on an enquiry from her Ladyſhip to me by her gentleman; who coming to me in company with Mr. Lilburne, I had no way but to confirm the report. And I underſtand, that Lady Betty takes it amiſs, that ſhe was not acquainted with ſo deſirable a piece of news from yourſelf.

* What is between hooks [ ] thou mayeſt ſuppoſe, Jack, I ſunk upon the women, in the account I gave them of the contents of this Letter.

Her Ladyſhip, it ſeems, has *buſineſs that calls her to town* [and you will poſſibly chuſe to put her right. If you do, it will, I preſume, *be in confidence*; that nothing may perſpire from your *own* family to contradict what I have given out.]

[I have ever been of opinion, *That truth ought to be ſtrictly adhered to on all occaſions:* And am concerned that I have (tho' with ſo good a view) departed from my old maxim. But my dear friend Mr. John Harlowe would have it ſo. Yet I never knew a departure of this kind a *ſingle* departure. But, to make the beſt of it now, allow me, Sir, once more to beg the Lady, as ſoon as poſſible, to authenticate the report given out.] When both you and the Lady join in the acknowledgment of your marriage, it will be impertinent in any one to be inquiſitive as to the *day or week:* [And, if as privately celebrated as you intend (while the gentlewomen with whom you lodge are properly inſtructed, as you ſay they are, and who actually believe you were married long ago) who ſhall be able to give a contradiction to my report?]

And yet it is very probable, that minute enquiries will be made; and this is what renders precaution neceſſary. For Mr. James Harlowe will not believe that you are married; and is ſure, he ſays, that you both lived together when Mr. Hickman's application was made to Mr. John Harlowe: And if you lived together *any* time unmarried, he infers from *your* character, Mr. Lovelace, that it is not probable, that you would ever marry. And he leaves it to his two Uncles to decide, if you even *ſhould be married*, whether there be not room to believe, that his Siſter was *firſt diſhonoured*; and if ſo, to judge of the title ſhe will have to their favour, or to the forgiveneſs of any of her family. I believe, Sir, this part of my Letter had beſt be kept from the Lady.

Young Mr. Harlowe is *reſolved to find this out*, and *to come at his Siſter's ſpeech likewiſe*; and for that purpoſe

purpose sets out *to-morrow*, as I am well informed, *with a large attendance armed*; and *Mr. Solmes is to be of the party.* And what makes him the more earnest to find it out, is this: Mr. John Harlowe has told the whole family that he will alter and new settle his will. Mr. Anthony Harlowe is resolved to do to same by his; for, it seems, he has now given over all thoughts of changing his condition, *having lately been disappointed in a view he had of that sort with Mrs. Howe.* These two Brothers generally *act in concert*; and Mr. James Harlowe dreads (and let me tell you, that he has reason for it, on *my* Mr. Harlowe's account) that his younger Sister will be, at last, more benefited than he wishes for, by the alteration intended. He has already been endeavouring to sound his Uncle Harlowe on this subject; and wanted to know whether any *new application* had been made to him on his Sister's part. Mr. Harlowe avoided a direct answer, and expressed his wishes for a general Reconciliation, and his hopes that his Niece were married. This offended the furious young man, and he reminded his Uncle of Engagements they had all entered into at his Sister's going away, *not to be reconciled but by general consent.*

Mr. John Harlowe complains to me often, of the uncontroulableness of his Nephew; and says, that now, that the young man has not any-body of whose superior sense he stands in awe, he observes not decency in his behaviour to any of them. And this makes *my* Mr. Harlowe still more desirous than ever of bringing his younger Niece into favour again. I will not say all I might of this young man's extraordinary rapaciousness:—But one would think, *that these grasping men expect to live for ever!*

'I took the liberty but within these two hours, to 'propose to set on foot (and offered my cover to) a 'correspondence between *my friend, and his daughter-* '*niece*, as he still sometimes fondly calls her She

'was mistress of so much prudence, I said, that I was
'sure she could better direct every thing to its desire-
'able end, than any body else could. But he said,
'he did not think himself entirely at liberty to take
'such a step *at present*; and that it was best that he
'should have it in his power to say, occasionally, that
'he had not any correspondence *with* her, or Letter
'*from* her.

'You will see, Sir, from all this, the necessity of
'keeping our treaty an *absolute Secret*; and if the
'Lady has mentioned it to her *worthy friend* Miss
'Howe, I hope it is in confidence.'

[And now, Sir, a few lines in answer to yours of Monday last.]

[Mr. Harlowe was very well pleased with your readiness to come into his proposal. But as to what you *both* desire, that he will be present at the ceremony, he said, that his Nephew watched all his steps so narrowly, that he thought it was not practicable (if he were inclinable) to oblige you: But that he consented with all his heart, that I should be the person whom he had stipulated should be privately present at the ceremony on his part.]

[However, I think, I have an *expedient* for this, if your Lady *continues* to be very desirous of her Uncle's presence (except he should be more determined than his answer to me seemed to import); of which I shall acquaint you, and perhaps of what he says to it, *when I have the pleasure to see you in town*. But, indeed, I think you have *no time to lose*. Mr. Hawlowe is impatient to hear, that you are actually one; and I hope I may carry him down word, when I leave you next, that I *saw* the Ceremony performed.]

[If any obstacle arises from the Lady (from *You* it cannot) I shall be tempted *to think a little hardly of her punctilio*.]

Mr. Harlowe hopes, Sir, that you will rather take pains to *avoid*, than to *meet*, this violent young man.

He

He has the better opinion of you, let me tell you, Sir, from the account I gave him of your moderation and politeneſs; neither of which are qualities with his Nephew. *But we have all of us ſomething to amend.*

You cannot imagine how dearly my friend ſtill loves this excellent Niece of his—I will give you an inſtance of it, which affected me a good deal—'If 'once more, ſaid he (the laſt time but one we were 'together) I can but ſee this ſweet child gracing the 'upper-end of my table, as miſtreſs of my houſe, in 'my *allotted month*; all the reſt of my family preſent 'but as her gueſts; for ſo I formerly would have it; 'and had her *Mother's conſent for it.*—' There he ſtopt; for he was forced to turn his reverend face from me. Tears ran down his cheeks. Fain would he have hid them: But he could not—'Ye—yet, 'ſaid he—how—how' [Poor gentleman, he perfectly ſobbed] 'how ſhall I be able to bear the firſt 'meeting!'

I bleſs God I am *no hard-hearted man*, Mr. Lovelace: My eyes ſhewed to my worthy friend, that he had no reaſon to be aſhamed of his humanity before me.

I will put an end to this long epiſtle. Be pleaſed to make my compliments acceptable to the moſt excellent of women; as well as believe me to be,

Dear Sir,

Your faithful Friend, and humble Servant,

ANTONY TOMLINSON.

'During the converſation between me and the women, I had planted myſelf at the farther end of the apartment we were in, over-againſt the door, which was open; and oppoſite to the Lady's chamber-door, which was ſhut. I ſpoke ſo low that it was impoſſible for her, at that diſtance, to hear what we ſaid; and in this ſituation I could ſee if her door opened.

I told the women, that what I had mentioned to

my Spouſe of Lady Betty's coming to town with her Niece Montague, and of their intention to viſit my Beloved, whom they had never ſeen, nor ſhe them, was real; and that I expected news of their arrival every hour. I then ſhewed them copies of the other two letters, which I had left with *her*; the one from Lady Betty, the other from my Couſin Montague.—And here thou mayeſt read them if thou wilt.

Eternally reproaching, eternally upbraiding me, are my impertinent relations. But they are fond of occaſions to find fault with me. Their Love, their Love, Jack, and their dependence on my known good humour, are their inducements.

To Robert Lovelace, *Eſq.*

Dear Nephew, *Wedn. Morn. June 7.*

I Underſtand, that at length all our wiſhes are anſwered in your happy Marriage. But I think, we might as well have heard of it directly from you, as from the round-about way by which we have been made acquainted with it. Methinks, Sir, the *power* and the will we have to oblige you, ſhould not expoſe us the more to your ſlights and negligence. My Brother had ſet his heart upon giving to you the Wife we have all ſo long wiſhed you to have. But if you were actually married at the time you made him that requeſt (*ſuppoſing, perhaps, that his gout would not let him attend you*) it is but like *you* *.—If your Lady had *her* reaſons to wiſh it to be private while the differences between her family and ſelf continue, you might nevertheleſs have communicated it to us with *that* reſtriction; and we ſhould have forborn the public manifeſtations of our joy, upon an event we have ſo long deſired.

The diſtant way we have come to know it is by my my Steward; who is acquainted with a friend of

* I gave Mrs. Moore and Miſs Rawlins room to think this reproach *juſt*, Jack.

Captain

Captain Tomlinſon, to whom that gentleman revealed it: And he, it ſeems, had it from yourſelf and Lady, with ſuch circnmſtances as leave it not to be doubted.

I am, indeed, very much diſobliged with you: So is Lady Sarah. But I ſhall have a very ſpeedy opportunity to tell you ſo in perſon; being obliged to go to town to my old Chancery-affair. My Couſin Leeſon, who is, it ſeems, removed to Albemarle-ſtreet, has notice of it. I ſhall be at *her* houſe, where I beſpeak your attendance on Sunday night. I have written to my Couſin Charlotte for either her, or her Siſter, to meet me at Reading, and accompany me to town. I ſhall ſtay but a few days; my buſineſs being matter of form only. On my return I ſhall pop upon Lord M. at M. Hall, to ſee in what way his laſt Fit has left him.

Mean time, having told you my mind on your negligence, I cannot help congratulating you both on the occaſion—Your fair Lady particularly, upon her entrance into a family which is prepared to admire and love her.

My principal intention of writing to you (diſpenſing with the neceſſary punctilio) is, that you may acquaint my dear new Niece, that I will not be denied the honour of her company down with me into Oxfordſhire. I underſtand, that your propoſed houſe and equipages cannot be ſoon ready. She ſhall be with me till they are. I inſiſt upon it. This ſhall make all up. My houſe ſhall be her own. My ſervants and equipages her's.

Lady Sarah, who has not been out of her own houſe for months, will oblige me with her company for a week, in honour of a Niece ſo dearly beloved, as I am ſure ſhe will be of us all.

Being but in lodging in town, neither You nor your Lady can require much preparation.

Some time on Monday I hope to attend the dear young Lady, to make her my compliments; and to

receive *her* apology for *your* negligence: which, and her going down with me, as I ſaid before, ſhall be full ſatisfaction. Mean time, God bleſs *her* for her courage [Tell her I ſay ſo]; and bleſs you *both* in each other; and that will be happineſs to us all—particularly, to

Your truly affectionate Aunt,

Eliz. Lawrance.

To Robert Lovelace, *Eſq.*

Dear Couſin,

AT laſt, as we underſtand, there is ſome hope of you. Now does my good Lord run over his bead-roll of proverbs; of *Black Oxen*, *Wild Oats*, *Long Lanes*, and ſo forth.

Now, Couſin, ſay I, is your time come; and you will be no longer, I hope, an infidel either to the power or excellence of the Sex you have pretended hitherto ſo much to undervalue; nor a ridiculer or ſcoffer at an Inſtitution which all ſober people reverence, and all Rakes, ſooner or later, are brought to reverence, or to wiſh they had.

I want to ſee how you become your ſilken fetters: Whether the charming yoke ſits light upon your ſhoulders. If with ſuch a ſweet Yoke-fellow it does not, my Lord, and my Siſter, as well as I, think that you will deſerve a cloſer tie about your neek.

His Lordſhip is very much diſpleaſed, that you have not written him word of the Day, the Hour, the Manner, and every-thing. But I aſk him, How he can *already* expect any mark of deference or politeneſs from you? He muſt ſtay, I tell him, till that ſign of Reformation among others, appear from the influence and example of your Lady: But that, if ever you will be good for any thing, it will be quickly ſeen. And, O Couſin, what a vaſt, vaſt journey have you to take from the dreary Land of Libertiniſm, thro' the

bright

bright Province of Reformation, into the ſerene Kingdom of Happineſs?—You had need to loſe no time. You have many a weary ſtep to tread, before you can overtake thoſe travellers, who ſet out for it from a leſs remote quarter. But you have a charming Pole-ſtar to guide you; that's your advantage. I wiſh you joy of it: And as I have never yet expected any highly complaiſant thing from you, *I make no ſcruple to begin firſt*; but it is purely, I muſt tell you, in reſpect to my new Couſin; whoſe acceſſion into our family we moſt heartily congratulate and rejoice in.

I have a Letter from Lady Betty. She commands either my attendance or my Siſter's at Reading, to proceed with her to town, to Couſin Leeſon's. She puts Lord M. in hopes, that ſhe ſhall certainly bring down with her our lovely new Relation; for ſhe ſays, ſhe will not be denied. His Lordſhip is the willinger to let *me* be the perſon, as I am in a manner wild to ſee her; my ſiſter having two years ago had that honour at Sir Robert Biddulph's. So get ready to accompany us in our return; except your Lady has objections ſtrong enough to ſatisfy us all. Lady Sarah longs to ſee her; and ſays, This acceſſion to the family will ſupply to it the loſs of her beloved Daughter.

I ſhall ſoon, I hope, pay my compliments to the dear Lady in perſon: So have nothing to add, but that I am

Your old mad Playfellow and Couſin,

CHARLOTTE MONTAGUE.

The women having read the copies of theſe two Letters, I thought that I might then threaten and ſwagger—'But very little heart have I, ſaid I, to encourage ſuch a viſit from Lady Betty and Miſs Montague to my ſpouſe. For after all, I am tired out with her ſtrange ways. She is not what ſhe was, and (as I told her in your hearing, Ladies) I will leave this plaguy iſland, tho' the place of my birth.

'And tho' the ſtake I have in it is very conſiderable;
'and go and reſide in France or Italy, and never think
'of myſelf as a married man, *nor live like one.*'

O dear! ſaid one.

That would be a ſad thing! ſaid the other.

Nay, Madam [turning to Mrs. Moore]—Indeed, Madam [to Miſs Rawlins]—I am quite deſperate. I can no longer bear ſuch uſage. I have had the good fortune to be favoured by the ſmiles of very fine Ladies, though I ſay it [and I looked modeſt] both abroad and at home—[*Thou knoweſt this to be true, Jack*]. With regard to my Spouſe here, I had but one hope left (for as to the Reconciliation with her friends, I ſcorn them all too much to value that, but for her ſake); and that was, that if it pleaſed God to bleſs us with children, ſhe might entirely recover her uſual Serenity; and we might then be happy. But the Reconciliation her heart was ſo much ſet upon, is now, as I hinted before, entirely hopeleſs—Made ſo, by this raſh ſtep of her's, and by the raſher temper ſhe is in; ſince (as you will believe) her Brother and Siſter, when they come to know it, will make a fine handle of it againſt us both;—affecting, as they do at preſent, to diſbelieve our Marriage—and the dear creature herſelf too ready to countenance ſuch a diſbelief—as nothing *more than the Ceremony—as nothing more—hem!—as nothing more than the Ceremony*—

Here, as thou wilt perceive, I was baſhful; for Miſs Rawlins, by her preparatory primneſs, put me in mind, that it was *proper to be ſo*—

I turned half round; then facing the Fan-player, and the Matron—You *yourſelves*, Ladies, knew not what to believe till *Now*, that I have told you our Story: And I do aſſure you, that I ſhall not give myſelf the ſame trouble to convince people I hate; People from whom I neither expect nor deſire any favour; and who are determined *not* to be convinced. And what, pray, muſt be the iſſue, when her Uncle's friend comes,

altho'

altho' he ſeems to be a *truly worthy man?* Is it not natural for him to ſay, 'To what purpoſe, Mr. Lovelace, ſhould I endeavour to bring about a Reconciliation between Mrs. Lovelace and her friends, by means of her elder Uncle, when a good underſtanding is wanting between yourſelves?'—A fair inference, Mrs. Moore!—A fair inference, Miſs Rawlins—And here is the unhappineſs—'Till ſhe is reconciled to them, this curſed oath, in her notion, is binding.

The women ſeemed moved; for I ſpoke with great earneſtneſs, tho' low—And beſides, they love to have their Sex, and its favours, appear of importance to us. They ſhook their deep heads at each other, and looked ſorrowful: And this moved my tender heart too.

'Tis an unheard-of caſe, Ladies—Had ſhe not preferred me to all mankind—There I ſtopped—And that, reſumed I, feeling for my handkerchief, is what ſtaggered Captain Tomlinſon when he heard of her flight; who, the laſt time he ſaw us together, ſaw the moſt affectionate couple on earth!—The moſt affectionate couple on earth!—in the accent-grievous, repeated I.

Out then I pulled my handkerchief, and putting it to my eyes, aroſe, and walked to the window—It makes me weaker than a woman, Did I not love her, as never man loved *his wife* [I have no doubt but I do, Jack]

There again I ſtopt; and reſuming—Charming creature, as you ſee ſhe is, I wiſh I had never beheld her face!—Excuſe me, Ladies; traverſing the room. and having rubbed my eyes till I ſuppoſed them red, I turned to the women; and, pulling out my Letter-caſe, I will ſhew you one Leter—Here it is—Read it, Miſs Rawlins, if you pleaſe—It will confirm to you, how much all my family are prepared to admire her. I am freely treated in it;—ſo I am in the two others: But after what I have told you, nothing need be a ſecret to you two.

She

She took it, with an air of eager curiosity, and looked at the seal, ostentatiously coroneted; and at the superscription, reading out, *To Robert Lovelace, Esq.* — Ay Madam — Ay Miss, that's my name [giving myself an air, tho' I had told it to them before] I am not ashamed of it. My wife's maiden name— *Unmarried* name, I should rather say—fool that I am!—and I rubbed my cheek for vexation [Fool enough in conscience, Jack!] was Harlowe—Clarissa Harlowe—You heard me call her *My Clarissa*—

I did—but thought it to be a feigned or Love-name, said Miss Rawlins.

I wonder what is Miss Rawlins's Love-name, Jack. Most of the fair Romancers have in their early womanhood chosen Love-names. No parson ever gave more *real* names, than I have given *fictitious* ones. And to very good purpose: Many a sweet dear has answered me a Letter for the sake of owning a name which her Godmother never gave her.

No—It was her real name, I said.

I bid her read out the whole Letter. If the spelling be not exact, Miss Rawlins said I, you will excuse it; the writer is a Lord. But, perhaps, I may not shew it to my spouse; for if those I have left with her have no effect upon her, neither will this: And I shall not care to expose my Lord M. to her scorn. Indeed I begin to be quite careless of consequences.

Miss Rawlins, who could not but be pleased with this mark of my confidence, looked as if she pitied me.

And here thou mayest read the Letter, No. III.

To Robert Lovelace, *Esq.*

Cousin Lovelace, *M. Hall, Wedn. June 7.*

I Think you might have found time to let us know of your Nuptials being actually solemnized. I might have expected this peice of civility from you. But perhaps

haps the Ceremony was performed at the very time that you aſked me to be your Lady's Father—But I ſhould be angry if I proceed in my gueſſes—And *little ſaid is ſoon amended.*

But I can tell you, that Lady Betty Lawrance, whatever Lady Sarah does, will not ſo ſoon forgive you, as I have done. *Women reſent ſlights longer than men.* You that know ſo much of the Sex (I ſpeak it not however to your praiſe) might have known *That.* But never was you before acquainted with a Lady of ſuch an amiable character. I hope there will be but one Soul between you. I have before now ſaid, that I will diſinherit you, and ſettle all I can upon her, if you prove not a good huſband to her.

May this Marriage be crowned with a great many fine Boys (I deſire no Girls) to build up again a family ſo antient! The firſt Boy ſhall take my ſurname by Act of Parliament. That is my Will.

Lady Betty and Niece Charlotte will be in town about buſineſs *before you know where you are.* They long to pay their compliments to your fair Bride. I ſuppoſe you will hardly be at the Lawn when they get to town; becauſe Greme informs me, you have ſent no orders there for your Lady's accommodation.

Pritchard has all things in readineſs for ſigning. I will take no advantage of your Slights. Indeed I am too much uſed to them—More praiſe to my patience, than to your complaiſance, however.

One reaſon for Lady Betty's going up, as I may tell you *under the roſe*, is, to buy ſome ſuitable Preſents for Lady Sarah and all of us to make on this agreeable occaſion.

We would have blazed it away, could we have had timely notice, and thought it would have been agreeable to all round. The *like occaſions don't happen every day.*

My moſt affectionate compliments and congratulations

tions to my new Niece, conclude me, for the present, in violent pain, that with all your heroicalness would make you mad,

Your truly affectionate Uncle,

M.

This Letter clench'd the nail. Not but that, Miss Rawlins said, she saw I had been a wild gentleman; and, truly, she thought so, the moment she beheld me.

They began to intercede for my Spouse (so nicely had I turned the tables); and that I would not go abroad, and disappoint a Reconciliation so much wished for on one side, and such desirable prospects on the other in my own family.

Who knows, thought I to myself, but more may come of this plot, than I had even promised myself? What a happy man shall I be, if these women can be brought to join to carry my Marriage into consummation!

Ladies, you are exceeding good to us both. I should have some hopes, if my unhappily nice Spouse could be brought to dispense with the unnatural oath she has laid me under. You see what my case is. Do you think I may not insist upon her absolving me from this abominable oath? Will you be so good, as to give your advice, that one apartment may serve for a Man and his Wife at the hour of retirement?—Modestly put, Belford!—And let me here observe, that few Rakes would find a language so decent as to engage modest women to talk with him in, upon such subjects.

They both simpered, and looked upon one another.

These subjects always make women simper, at least. No *need* but of the most delicate hints to *them*. A man who is gross in a woman's company, ought to be knocked down with a club: For, like so many musical instruments, touch but a single wire, and the dear Souls are sensible all over.

To

To be ſure, Miſs Rawlins learnedly ſaid, playing with her Fan, a Caſuiſt would give it, that the matrimonial vow ought to ſuperſede any other obligation.

Mrs. Moore, for her part, was of opinion, that, if the Lady owned herſelf to be a wife, ſhe ought to behave *like* one.

Whatever be my luck, thought I, with this *all-eyed* Fair one, any other woman in the world, from fifteen to five-and-twenty, would be mine upon my own terms before the morning.

And now, that I may be at hand to take all advantages, I will endeavour, ſaid I to myſelf, to make ſure of good quarters.

I am your Lodger, Mrs. Moore, in virtue of the Earneſt I have given you for theſe apartments, and for any one you can ſpare above for my ſervants. Indeed for *all* you have to ſpare—for who knows what my Spouſe's Brother may attempt? I will pay you your own demand; and that for a month or two certain (Board included) as I ſhall or ſhall not be your hindrance. Take *that* as a pledge; or in part of payment —Offering her a thirty pound Bank Note.

She declined taking it; deſiring ſhe might conſult the Lady firſt; adding, that ſhe doubted not my Honour; and that ſhe would not let her apartments to any other perſon, whom ſhe knew not ſomething of, while I and the Lady were here.

The Lady! The Lady! from both the womens mouths continually (which ſtill implied, a doubt in their hearts): And not *Your Spouſe*, and *Your Lady, Sir.*

I never met with ſuch women, thought I:—So thoroughly convinced but this moment, yet already doubting—I am afraid I have a couple of Sceptics to deal with.

I knew no reaſon, I ſaid, for my wife to object to my lodging in the ſame houſe with her here, any more than in town, at Mrs. Sinclair's. But were ſhe to make

ſuch objection, I would not quit poſſeſſion ſince it was not unlikely, that the ſame freakiſh diſorder which brought her to Hamſtead, might carry her abſolutely out of my knowledge.

They both ſeemed embarraſſed; and looked upon one another; yet with ſuch an air, as if they thought there was reaſon in what I ſaid. And I declared myſelf her Boarder, as well as Lodger; and dinner time approaching, was not denied to be the former.

LETTER IX.

Mr. LOVELACE, *To* JOHN BELFORD, *Eſq.*

I Thought it was now high time to turn my whole mind to my Beloved; who had had full leiſure to weigh the contents of the Letters I had left with her.

I therefore requeſted Mrs. Moore to ſtep in, and deſire to know whether ſhe would be pleaſed to admit me to attend her in her apartment, on occaſion of the Letters I had left with her; or whether ſhe would favour me with her company in the Dining-room?

Mrs. Moore deſired Miſs Rawlins to accompany her in to the Lady. They tapped at the door, and were both admitted.

I cannot but ſtop here for one minute, to remark, tho' againſt myſelf, upon that Security which Innocence gives, that nevertheleſs had better have in it a greater mixture of the Serpent with the Dove. For here, heedleſs of all I could ſay behind her back, becauſe ſhe was ſatisfied with her own worthineſs, ſhe permitted me to go on with my own Story, without interruption, to perſons as great ſtrangers to her as to me; and who, as ſtrangers to *both*, might be ſuppoſed to lean to the ſide moſt injured: And that, as I managed it, was to mine. A dear ſilly Soul, thought I, at the time, to depend upon the goodneſs of her own heart, when the heart cannot be ſeen into it but by its actions; and ſhe, to appearance, a Runaway, an Eloper, from a tender,

a moſt

a moſt indulgent Huſband!—To neglect to cultivate the opinion of individuals, when the whole world is governed by appearance!

Yet, what can be expected of an angel under Twenty?—ſhe has a world of knowledge; knowledge *ſpeculative*, as I may ſay, but no *Experience!* How ſhould ſhe?—Knowledge by theory only is a vague uncertain light: A Will o' the Wiſp, which as often miſleads the doubting mind, as puts it right.

There are many things in the world, could a moralizer ſay, that would afford inexpreſſible pleaſure to a reflecting mind, were it not for the mixture they come to us with. To be graver ſtill: I have ſeen Parents [Perhaps my own did ſo] who delighted in thoſe very qualities in their children, while young, the natural conſequences of which (too much indulged and encouraged) made them, as they grew up, the plague of their hearts—To bring this home to my preſent purpoſe, I muſt tell thee, that I adore this charming creature for her viligant prudence; but yet I would not, methinks, wiſh her, by virtue of that prudence, which is, however, neceſſary to carry her above the *devices* of all the reſt of the world, to be too wiſe for *mine*.

My Revenge, my *ſworn* Revenge, is nevertheleſs (adore her as I will) uppermoſt in my heart.—Miſs Howe ſays, that my Love is an *Herodian* Love (*a*): By my Soul, that Girl's a Witch! I am half-ſorry to ſay, *that I find a pleaſure in playing the Tyrant over what I love.* Call it an ungenerous pleaſure, if thou wilt: Softer hearts than mine know it. The women to a woman know it, and *ſhew* it too, whenever they are truſted with power. And why ſhould it be thought ſtrange, that I, who love them ſo dearly, and ſtudy them ſo much, ſhould catch the infection of them?

(*a*) See p. 42.

LETTER X.

Mr. LOVELACE, *To* JOHN BELFORD, *Esq.*

I Will now give thee the ſubſtance of the dialogue that paſſed between the two women and the Lady.

Wonder not, that a perverſe Wife makes a liſtening Huſband. The event, however, as thou wilt find, juſtified the old obſervation, *That liſtners ſeldom hear good of themſelves.* Conſcious of their own demerits, if I may gueſs by myſelf [There's ingenuouſneſs, Jack!] and fearful of cenſure, they ſeldom find themſelves diſappointed. There is ſomething of ſenſe, after all in theſe proverbs, in theſe phraſes, in this *wiſdom of nations.*

Mrs. Moore was to be the meſſenger; but Miſs Rawlins began the dialogue.

Your SPOUSE, Madam,—[Devil!—Only to fiſh for a negative or affirmative declaration.]

Cl. My *Spouſe*, Madam—

Miſs R. Mr. Lovelace, Madam, avers, that you are married to him; and begs admittance, or your company in the Dining-room, to talk upon the ſubject of the Letters he left with you.

Cl. He is a poor wicked wretch. Let me beg of you, Madam, to favour me with your company as often as poſſible while he is hereabouts, and I remain here.

Miſs R. I ſhall with pleaſure attend you, Madam. But, methinks, I could wiſh you would *ſee* the gentleman, and hear what he has to ſay, on the ſubject of the Letters.

Cl. My caſe is a hard, a very hard one—I am quite bewildered!—I know not what to do!—I have not a friend in the world, that can or will help me!—Yet had none *but* friends till I knew *that man!*

Miſs R. The gentleman neither looks nor talks like a bad man.—Not a *very* bad man; as men go.

As

As men go!—Poor Miſs Rawlins! thought I—And doſt thou know, *how men go?*

Cl. O Madam, you know him not!—He can put on the appearance of an angel of light; but has a black, a very black heart!

Poor I!—

Miſs R. I could not have thought it, truly!—But men are very deceitful now-a-days.

Now-a-days!—A fool!—Have not her hiſtory-books told her, that they were always ſo?

Mrs. Moore, ſighing. I have found it ſo, I am ſure, to my coſt!—

Who knows but in her time, poor goody Moore may have met with a Lovelace, or a Belford, or ſome ſuch vile fellow?--My little hare-um-ſcare-um Beauty knows not what ſtrange hiſtories every woman living, who has had the leaſt independence of will, could tell her, were ſuch to be as communicative as ſhe is.—But here's the thing;—I have given her cauſe enough of offence; but not enough to make her hold her tongue,

Cl. As to the Letters he has left with me, I know not what to ſay to *them*:—But am reſolved never to have any thing to ſay to *him*.

Miſs R. If, Madam, I may be allowed to ſay ſo, I think you carry matters very far.

Cl. Has he been making a bad cauſe a good one with you, Madam?—*That* he can do with thoſe who know him not. Indeed I heard him talking, tho' not what he ſaid, and am indifferent about it. But what account does he give of himſelf?

I was pleaſed to hear this. To arreſt, to ſtop her paſſion, thought I, in the height of its career, is a charming preſage.

Then the buſy Miſs Rawlins fiſhed on, to find out from her either a *confirmation* or *diſavowal* of my Story, Was Lord M. my Uncle? Did I court her at firſt with the allowance of her friends, her Brother excepted? Had I a rencounter with that Brother? Was

ſhe ſo perſecuted in favour of a very diſagreeable man, one Solmes, as to enduce her to throw herſelf into my protection ?

None of theſe were denied. All the objections ſhe *could* have made, were ſtifled, or kept in, by the conſideration (as ſhe mentioned) that ſhe ſhould ſtay there but a little while; and that her Story was too long. But Miſs Rawlins would not be thus eaſily anſwered.

Miſs R. He ſays, Madam, that he could not prevail for Marriage, till he had conſented, under a ſolemn oath, to ſeparate Beds, while your family remained unreconciled.

Cl. O the wretch! What can be ſtill in his head, to endeavour to paſs theſe ſtories upon ſtrangers?

So no direct denial, thought I—Admirable!—All will do by-and-by!

Miſs R. He has owned, that an accidental Fire had frightened you very much on Wedneſday night—And that—And that—And that—an accidental Fire had frightened you—Very much frightened you—laſt Wedneſday night!

Then, after a ſhort pauſe—In ſhort, He owned, That he had taken ſome innocent liberties, which might have led to a breach of the oath you had impoſed upon him: And that this was the cauſe of your diſpleaſure.

I would have been glad to ſee how my Charmer then looked.—To be ſure ſhe was at a loſs in her own mind, to juſtify herſelf for reſenting ſo highly an offence ſo trifling.—She heſitated—Did not preſently ſpeak—When ſhe did, ſhe wiſhed, That ſhe, Miſs Rawlins, might never meet with any man who would take ſuch innocent liberties with *her*.

Miſs Rawlins puſhed further.

Your caſe, to be ſure, Madam, is very particular. But if the hope of a Reconciliation with your own friends is made more diſtant by your leaving him, give me leave to ſay, That 'tis pity—'tis pity—[I ſuppoſe

the

the maiden then primm'd, fann'd, and bluſh'd;—'tis pity] the oath cannot be diſpenſed with; eſpecially as he owns he has not been ſo ſtrict a liver.—

I could have gone in and kiſſed the girl.

Cl. You have heard *his* Story. Mine, as I told you before, is too long, and too melancholy; my diſorder on ſeeing the wretch is too great; and my time here is too ſhort, for me to enter upon it. And if he has any end to ſerve by his own vindication, in which I ſhall not be a *perſonal* ſufferer, let him make himſelf appear as white as an angel; with all my heart.

My Love for her, and the excellent character I gave her were then pleaded.

Cl. Specious ſeducer!—Only tell me, if I cannot get away from him by ſome back-way?

How my heart then went *pit-a-pat!* to ſpeak in the female dialect.

Cl. Let me look out—[I heard the Saſh lifted up] Whither does that path lead? Is there no poſſibility of getting to a coach?—Surely, he muſt deal with ſome fiend, or how could he have found me out?—Cannot I ſteal to ſome neighbouring houſe, where I may be concealed till I can get quite away?—You are good people!—I have not been always among ſuch!—O help me, help me, Ladies [with a voice of impatience] or I am ruined!

Then pauſing, Is that the way to Hendon? [pointing, I ſuppoſe]—Is Hendon a private place?—The Hamſtead coach, I am told, will carry paſſengers thither.

Mrs. Moore. I have an honeſt friend at Mill-hill [Devil fetch her! thought I] where, if ſuch be your determination, Madam, and if you think yourſelf in danger, you may be ſafe, I believe.

Cl. Any-whither, if I can but eſcape from *this man!*—Whither does that path lead, out yonder?—What is that town on the right-hand called?

Mrs. Moore. Highgate, Madam.

Miſs

Miſs R. On the ſide of the Heath is a little village called North-end. A kinſwoman of mine lives there. But her houſe is ſmall. I am not ſure ſhe could accommodate ſuch a Lady.

Devil take *her* too! thought I—I imagined, that I had made myſelf a better intereſt in theſe women. But the whole Sex love plotting—And plotters too, Jack.

Cl. A barn, an outhouſe, a garret will be a palace to me, if it will but afford me a refuge from *this man!*

Her ſenſes, thought I, are much livelier than *mine*. What a devil have I done, that ſhe ſhould be ſo very implacable!—I told thee, Belford, All I did: Was there any-thing in it ſo *very* much amiſs?—Such proſpects of Family-reconciliation before her too!—To be ſure ſhe is a very *ſenſible* Lady!—

She then eſpied my new ſervant walking under the window, and aſked, if he were not one of mine?—

Will. was on the look-out for old Grimes [So is the fellow called whom my beloved has diſpatched to Miſs Howe]. And being told that the man ſhe ſaw *was* my ſervant; I ſee, ſaid ſhe, that there is no eſcaping, unleſs you, Madam [to Miſs Rawlins, I ſuppoſe] can befriend me till I can get farther. I have no doubt that the fellow is planted about the houſe to watch my ſteps. But the wicked wretch his maſter has no *right to controul me*. He ſhall not hinder me from going whither I pleaſe. I will raiſe the town upon him, if he moleſts me. Dear Ladies, is there no back-door for me to get out at while you hold him in talk?

Miſs R. Give me leave to aſk you, Madam, Is there no room to hope for accommodation? Had you not better ſee him? He certainly loves you dearly: He is a fine gentleman: You may exaſperate him, and make matters more unhappy for yourſelf.

Cl. O Mrs. Moore, O Miſs Rawlins! you know not the man!—I wiſh not to ſee his face, nor to exchange another word with him as long as I live.

Mrs.

Mrs. Moore. I don't find, Miſs Rawlins, that the gentleman has miſrepreſented any thing. You ſee, Madam [to my Clariſſa] how reſpectful he is; not to come in till permitted. He certainly loves you dearly. Pray, Madam, let him talk to you, as he wiſhes to do, on the ſubject of the Letters.

Very kind of Mrs. Moor!—Mrs. Moore, thought I, is a very good woman. I did not curſe her *then*.

Miſs Rawlins ſaid ſomething; but ſo low, that I could not hear what it was. Thus it was anſwered.

Cl. I am greatly diſtreſſed! I know not what to do!—But, Mrs. Moore, be ſo good as to give his Letters to him—Here they are.—Be pleaſed to tell him, That I wiſh him and Lady Betty and Miſs Montague a happy meeting. He never can want excuſes to them for what has happened, any more than pretences to thoſe he would delude. Tell him, That he has ruined me in the opinion of my own friends. I am for that reaſon the leſs ſolicitous how I appear to his.

Mrs. Moore then came to me; and I, being afraid that ſomething would paſs mean time between the other two, which I ſhould not like, took the Letters, and entered the room, and found them retired into the Cloſet; my Beloved whiſpering with an air of earneſtneſs to Miſs Rawlins, who was all attention.

Her back was towards me; and Miſs Rawlins, by pulling her ſleeve, giving intimation of my being there. Can I have no retirement uninvaded, Sir, ſaid ſhe, with indignation, as if ſhe were interrupted in ſome talk her heart was in?—What buſineſs have you here, or with me?—You have your Letters; have you not?

Lovel. I have, my dear; and let me beg of you to conſider what you are about. I every moment expect Captain Tomlinſon here. Upon my Soul, I do. He has promiſed to keep from your Uncle what has happened: But what will he think if he find you hold in this ſtrange humour?

Cl. I will endeavour, Sir, to have patience with

you for a moment or two, while I aſk you a few queſtions before this Lady, and before Mrs. Moore [who juſt then came in] both of whom you have prejudiced in your favour by your ſpecious Stories :—Will you ſay, Sir, that we are married together ? Lay your hand upon your heart, and anſwer me, Am I your wedded Wife ?

I am gone too far, thought I, to give up for ſuch a puſh as this, home-one as it is.

My deareſt Soul ! how can you put ſuch a queſtion? It is either for *your* honour or *my own*, that it ſhould be doubted ?—Surely, Surely, Madam, you cannot have attended to the contents of Captain Tomlinſon's Letter.

She complained often of want of ſpirits throughout our whole contention, and of weakneſs of perſon and mind, from the fits ſhe had been thrown into : But little reaſon had *ſhe* for this complaint, as I thought, who was able to hold me to it, as ſhe did. I own that I was exceſſively concerned for her ſeveral times.

You and I ! *Vileſt of men !*—

My name is Lovelace, Madam—

Therefore it is that I call you the *vileſt of men* [Was this pardonable Jack !]—*You* and *I* know the truth, the *whole* truth—I want not to clear up my reputation with theſe gentlewomen :—That is already loſt with every one I had moſt reaſon to value : But let me have this *new* ſpecimen of what you are capable of—Say, wretch (ſay, Lovelave, if thou hadſt rather) Art thou really and truly my wedded Huſband ?—Say ; anſwer without heſitation.

She trembled with impatient indignation; but had a wildneſs in her manner, which I took ſome advantage of, in order to parry this curſed thruſt. And a curſed thruſt it was ; ſince, had I poſitively averred it, ſhe never would have believed any thing I ſaid : And had I owned that I was not married, I had deſtroyed my own plot, as well with the women as with her ; and

and

could have no pretence for purſuing her, or hindering her from going whitherſoever ſhe pleaſed. Not that I was aſhamed to aver it, had it been conſiſtent with policy. I would not have thee think me ſuch a milk-ſop neither.

Lovel. My deareſt Love, how wildly you talk! What would you *have* me anſwer? It is neceſſary that I ſhould anſwer? May I not re-appeal this to your own Breaſt, as well as to Captain Tomlinſon's Treaty and Letter? You know yourſelf how matters ſtand between us.—And Captain Tomlinſon—

Cl. O wretch! Is this an anſwer to my queſtion? Say, Are we married, or are we not?

Lovel. What *makes a Marriage*, we all know. If it be the Union of two hearts [There was a turn, Jack!] to my utmoſt grief, I muſt ſay we are *not*; ſince now I ſee you hate me. If it be the Completion of Marriage, to my confuſion and regret, I muſt own we are *not*. But, my dear, will you be pleaſed to conſider what anſwer half a dozen people whence you came, could give to your queſtion? And do not now, in *the diſorder of your mind*, and the height of paſſion, bring into queſtion before theſe gentlewomen a point you have acknowleged before thoſe who know us better.

I would have whiſpered her about the Treaty with her Uncle, and about the contents of the Captain's Letter; but, retreating, and with a rejecting hand, Keep thy diſtance, *man*, cried the dear inſolent—To thine own heart I appeal, ſince thou evadeſt me thus pitifully!—I own no marriage with thee!—Bear witneſs, Ladies, I do not. And ceaſe to torment me, ceaſe to follow me.—Surely, ſurely, faulty as I have been, I have not deſerved to be *thus* perſecuted!—I reſume, therefore, my former language: You have no right to purſue me: You *know* you have not: Begone, then, and leave me to make the beſt of my hard lot. O my dear cruel Father! ſaid ſhe, in a vio-

lent fit of grief [falling upon her knees, and clasping her uplifted hands together] thy heavy curse is completed upon thy devoted Daughter! I am *punished*, dreadfully punished, *by the very wretch in whom I had placed my wicked confidence!*

By my Soul, Belford, the little witch with her words, but more by her manner, moved *me!* Wonder not then, that her action, her grief, her tears, set the women into the like compassionate manifestations.

Had I not a cursed task of it?

The two women withdrew to the further end of the room, and whispered, A strange case! There is no phrensy here—I just heard said.

The charming creature threw her handkerchief over her head and neck, continuing kneeling, her back towards me, and her face hid upon a chair, and repeatedly sobbed with grief and passion.

I took this opportunity to step to the women, to keep them steady.

You see, Ladies [whispering] what an unhappy man I am! You see what a spirit this dear creature has! – All, all owing to her implacable Relations, and to her Father's Curse.—A curse upon them all! they have turned the head of the most charming woman in the world!

Ah! Sir, Sir, replied Miss Rawlins, whatever be the fault of her Relations, all is not as it should be between you and her. 'Tis plain she does not think herself married: 'Tis plain she does not: And if you have any Value for the poor Lady, and would not totally deprive her of her senses, you had better withdraw, and leave to time and cooler consideration the event in your favour.

She will compel me to this at last, I fear, Miss Rawlins; I *fear* she will; and then we are both undone: For I cannot live without her; she knows it too well: And she has not a friend who will look upon her: This also she knows. Our Marriage,

when

when her Uncle's friend comes will be proved inconteſtably. But I am aſhamed to think I have given her room to believe it no Marriage: That's what ſhe harps upon!

Well, 'tis a ſtrange caſe, a very ſtrange one, ſaid Miſs Rawlins; and was going to ſay further, when the angry Beauty, coming towards the door, ſaid Mrs. Moore, I beg a word with you. And they both ſtepped into the dining-room.

I ſaw her juſt before put a parcel into her pocket; and followed them out, for fear ſhe ſhould ſlip away; and ſtepping to the ſtairs, that ſhe *might not go by me*, Will, cried I, aloud [tho' I knew he was not near] —Pray, child, to a maid, who anſwered, call either of my ſervants to me.

She then came up to me, with a wrathful countenance: Do you call your ſervant, Sir, to hinder me, between you, from going whither I pleaſe?

Don't my deareſt life, miſinterpret every-thing I do. Can you think me ſo mean and ſo unworthy as to employ a ſervant to conſtrain you?—I call him to ſend to the public-houſes, or inns in this town, to enquire after Captain Tomlinſon, who may have alighted at ſome one of them, and be now, perhaps, needleſly adjuſting his dreſs; and I would have him come, were he to be without cloaths, God forgive me! for I am ſtabbed to the heart by your cruelty.

Anſwer was returned, that neither of my ſervants was in the way.

Not in the way, ſaid I!—Whither can the dogs be gone?

O Sir! with a ſcornful air; not far, I'll warrant. One of them was under the window juſt now; according to order, I ſuppoſe, to watch my ſteps—But I will do what I pleaſe, and go whither I pleaſe; and that to your face.

God forbid, that I ſhould hinder you in any thing that you may do with ſafety to yourſelf!

Now I verily believe, that her deſign was, to ſlip out in purſuance of the cloſet-whiſpering between her and Miſs Rawlins; perhaps to Miſs Rawlins's houſe.

She then ſtept back to Mrs. Moore, and gave her ſomething, which proved to be a diamond ring, and deſired her [not whiſperingly, but with an air of defiance to me] that That might be a pledge for her, till ſhe defrayed her demands; which ſhe ſhould ſoon find means to do; having no more money about her, than ſhe might have occaſion for before ſhe came to an acquaintance's.

Mrs. Moore would have declined taking it; but ſhe would not be denied; and then, wiping her eyes, ſhe put on her gloves—Nobody has a right to ſtop me, ſaid ſhe!—I *will* go!—Whom ſhould I be afraid of?—Her very queſtion, charming creature! teſtifying her fear.

I beg pardon, Madam [turning to Mrs. Moore, and courteſying] for the trouble I have given you.—I beg pardon, Madam, to Miſs Rawlins [courteſying likewiſe to her]—You may both hear of me in a happier hour, if ſuch a one fall to my lot—And God bleſs you both!—ſtruggling with her tears till ſhe ſobbed—and away was tripping.

I ſtepped to the door: I put it to; and ſetting my back againſt it, took her ſtruggling hand—My deareſt life! My angel! ſaid I, why will you thus diſtreſs me?—Is this the forgiveneſs which you ſo ſolemnly promiſed?—

Unhand me, Sir!—You have no buſineſs with me! You have no right over me! You *know* you have not.

But whither, whither, my deareſt Love, would you go!—Think you not that I will follow you, were it to the world's end!—Whither would you go?

Well do you aſk me, whither I would go, who have been the occaſion that I have not a friend left!—But God, who knows my innocence, and my upright inten-

intentions, will not wholly abandon me when I am out of your power—But while in it, I cannot expect a gleam of the Divine grace or favour to reach me.

How ſevere is this!—How ſhockingly ſevere!—Out of *your* preſence, my angry Fair-one, I can neither hope for the one nor the other. As my Couſin Montague, in the Letter you have read, obſerves, You are my pole-ſtar, and my guide; and if ever I am to be happy, either here or hereafter, it muſt be in and by you.

She would then have opened the door. But I reſpectfully oppoſing her, Begone, Man! Begone, Mr. Lovelace! ſaid ſhe: Stop not my way. If you would not that I ſhould attempt the window, give me paſſage by the door; for, once more, you have *no right to detain me.*

Your reſentments, my deareſt life, I will own to be well grounded. I will acknowlege, that I have been all in fault. On my knee [and down I dropt] I aſk your pardon. And can you refuſe to ratify your own *promiſe?*—Look forward to the happy proſpect before us. See you not my Lord M. and Lady Sarah longing to bleſs *you*, for bleſſing me, and their whole family? Can you take no pleaſure in the promiſed viſit of Lady Betty and my Couſin Montague? And in the protection *they* offer you, if you are diſſatisfied with *mine?* Have you no wiſh to ſee your Uncle's friend? Stay only till Captain Tomlinſon comes. Receive from him the news of your Uncle's compliance with the wiſhes of both.

She ſeemed altogether diſtreſſed; was ready to ſink; and forced to lean againſt the wainſcot, as I kneeled at her feet. A ſtream of tears at laſt burſt from her leſs indignant eyes—Good heaven! ſaid ſhe, lifting up her lovely face, and claſped hands, what is at laſt to be my deſtiny;—Deliver me from this dangerous man; and direct me! I know not what I do; what I can do; nor what I ought to do!

The women, as I had owned our Marriage to be but half completed, heard nothing in this whole ſcene to contradict (not flagrantly to contradict) what I had aſſerted: They believed they ſaw in her returning temper, and ſtaggered reſolution, a Love for me, which her indignation had before ſuppreſſed; and they joined to perſuade her to tarry till the Captain came, and to hear his propoſals; repreſenting the dangers to which ſhe would be expoſed; the fatigues ſhe might endure; a Lady of her appearance, unguarded, unprotected. On the other hand, they dwelt upon my declared contrition, and on my promiſes; for the performance of which they offered to be bound. So much had my kneeling humility affected them.

Women, Jack, tacitly acknowlege the inferiority of their Sex, in the pride they take to behold a kneeling Lover at their feet.

She turned from me, and threw herſelf into a chair.

I aroſe, and approached her with reverence. My deareſt creature, ſaid I—and was proceeding—But, with a face glowing with conſcious dignity, ſhe interrupted me—Ungenerous, ungrateful Lovelace!—You know not the value of the heart you have inſulted! Nor can you conceive how much my ſoul deſpiſes your meanneſs. But meanneſs muſt ever be the portion of the man, who can act vilely!—

The women believing we were likely to be on better terms, retired. The dear Perverſe oppoſed their going; but they ſaw I was deſirous of their abſence. And when they had withdrawn, I once more threw myſelf at her feet, and acknowleged my offences; implored her forgiveneſs for this one time, and promiſed the moſt exact circumſpection for the future.

It was impoſſible for her, ſhe ſaid, to keep her *Memory* and *forgive* me. What hadſt thou *ſeen* in the conduct of Clariſſa Harlowe, that ſhould encourage ſuch an inſult upon her, as thou didſt dare to make? How meanly muſt thou think of *her*, that *thou* couldſt

preſume

preſume to be ſo guilty, and expect *her* to be ſo weak as to forgive thee?

I beſought her to let me read over to her Captain Tomlinſon's Letter. I was ſure it was impoſſible ſhe could have given it the requiſite attention.

I *have* given it the requiſite attention, ſaid ſhe; and the other Letters too. So that what I ſay, is upon deliberation. And what have I to fear from my brother and Siſter?—They can but *complete* the ruin of my Fortunes with my Father and Uncles. Let them and welcome. You, Sir, I thank you, have lowered my Fortunes: But I bleſs God, that my Mind is not ſunk with my Fortunes. It is, on the contrary, raiſed above Fortune, and above You; and for half a word, they ſhall have the Eſtate they have envied me for, and an acquittal from me of all expectations from my family that may make them uneaſy.

I lifted up my hands and eyes in ſilent admiration of her.

My Brother, Sir, may think me ruined. To the praiſe of *your* character he may think it impoſſible to be with *you*, and be innocent. You have but two well juſtified their harſheſt cenſures by every part of your conduct. But now, that I have eſcaped from you, and that I am out of the reach of your myſterious devices, I will wrap myſelf up in mine own innocence [and then the paſſionate Beauty folded her arms about herſelf] and leave to time, and to my future circumſpection, the re-eſtabliſhment of my character.—Leave me then, Sir—Purſue me not!—

Good Heaven! interrupting her—And all this, for what?—Had I *not* yielded to your entreaties (Forgive me, Madam) you could not have carried farther your reſentments—

Wretch!—Was it not crime enough to give *occaſion* for thoſe *entreaties?* Wouldſt thou make a merit to me, that thou didſt not utterly ruin *her* whom thou oughteſt to have protected?—Begone, man? turning

from me, her face crimsoned over with passion—See me no more!—I cannot bear thee in my sight!—

Dearest, dearest creature!

If I forgive thee, Lovelace—And there she stopped. To endeavour, proceeded she, to endeavour, by *premeditation*, by *low contrivance*, by *cries of Fire*—to terrify a poor creature who had consented to take a wretched chance with thee for life!

For Heaven's sake—offering to take her repulsing hand, as she was flying from me towards the closet—

What hast thou to do, to plead the sake of Heaven in thy favour, O darkest of human minds!

Then turning *from me*, wiping her eyes, and again turning *towards me*, but her sweet face half-aside, What difficulties hast thou involved me in!—*That thou hadst a plain path before thee*, after thou hadst betrayed me into thy power—At once my mind takes in the whole of thy crooked behaviour; and if thou thinkest of Clarissa Harlowe as her proud heart tells her thou oughtest to think of her, thou wilt seek thy fortunes elsewhere. How often hast thou provoked me to tell thee, that my Soul is above thee?

For Heaven's sake, Madam, for a Soul's sake, which it is in your power to save from perdition, forgive me the past offence. I am the greatest villain on earth, if it was a premeditated one. Yet I presume not to excuse myself. On your mercy I throw myself. I will not offer at any plea, but that of penitence. See but Captain Tomlinson. See but Lady Betty and my Cousin; let *them* plead for me; let *them* be guaranties for my honour.

If Captain Tomlinson come while I stay here, I may see *him*. But as for *you*, Sir—

Dearest creature! let me beg of you not to aggravate my offence to the Captain, when he comes. Let me beg of you—

What askest thou?—Is it not, that I shall be of party against myself!—That I shall palliate—

De

Do not charge me, Madam, interrupted I, with villainous premeditation !—Do not give ſuch a conſtruction to my offence, as may weaken your Uncle's opinion—as may ſtrengthen your Brother's—

She flung from me to the further end of the room [*She could go no further*]—And juſt then Mrs. Moore came up, and told her, that dinner was ready; and that ſhe had prevailed upon Miſs Rawlins to give her her company.

You muſt excuſe me, Mrs. Moore, ſaid ſhe. Miſs Rawlins I hope alſo will—But I cannot eat—I cannot go down. As for *you*, Sir, I ſuppoſe you will think it right to depart hence; at leaſt till the gentleman comes whom you expect.

I reſpectfully withdrew into the next room, that Mrs. Moore might acquaint her [I durſt not myſelf] that I was her Lodger and Boarder, as [whiſperingly] I deſired ſhe would: and meeting Miſs Rawlings in the paſſage, Deareſt Miſs Rawlins, ſaid I, ſtand my friend: Join with Mrs. Moore to pacify my Spouſe, if ſhe has any new flights upon my having taken lodgings, and intending to board here. I hope ſhe will have more generoſity than to think of hindering a gentlewoman from letting her lodgings.

I ſuppoſe Mrs. Moore (whom I left with my Fair-one) had appriſed her of this before Miſs Rawlins went in; for I heard her ſay, while I with-held Miſs Rawlins—'No, indeed; He is much miſtaken—'Surely he does not think I will.'

They both expoſtulated with her, as I could gather from bits and ſcraps of what they ſaid; for they ſpoke ſo low, that I could not hear any diſtinct ſentence, but from the fair Perverſe, whoſe anger made her louder. And to this purpoſe I heard her deliver herſelf in anſwer to different parts of their talk to her:—'Good 'Mrs. Moore, dear Miſs Rawlins, preſs me no fur-'ther:—I cannot ſit down at table with him!'

'They ſaid ſomething, as I ſuppoſe in my behalf—

'O the infinuating wretch!—What defence have I 'againſt a man, who, go where I will, can turn 'every one, even of the virtuous of my ſex, in his 'favour?'

After ſomething elſe ſaid, which I heard not diſtinctly—'This is execrable cunning!—Were you to 'know his wicked heart, he is not without hope of 'engaging you two good perſons to ſecond him in 'the vileſt of his machinations.'

How came ſhe (thought I at the inſtant) by all this penetration? My devil ſurely does not play me booty. If I thought he did, I would marry, and live honeſt, to be even with him.

I ſuppoſe then, they urged the plea which I hinted to Miſs Rawlins at going in, that ſhe would not be Mrs. Moore's hindrance; for thus ſhe expreſſed herſelf—'he will no doubt pay you your own price. You 'need not queſtion his liberality. But one houſe can-'not hold us. Why, if it would, did I fly from him, 'to ſeek refuge among ſtrangers!'

Then, in anſwer to ſomewhat elſe they pleaded—'"Tis a miſtake, Madam; I am *not* reconciled to him, 'I will believe nothing he ſays Has he not given 'you a flagrant ſpecimen of what a man he is, and 'of what he is capable, by the diſguiſes you ſaw him 'in? My Story is too long, and my Stay here will be 'but ſhort; or I could convince you, that my reſent-'ments againſt him are but too well founded.'

I ſuppoſe then, that they pleaded for *her* leave, for *my* dining with them: For ſhe ſaid! 'I have nothing 'to ſay to that—It is your own houſe, Mrs. Moore—'It is your own table—You may admit whom you 'pleaſe to it—Only leave me at my liberty to chuſe 'my company.'

Then in anſwer, as I ſuppoſe, to their offer of ſending her up a plate—'a bit of bread, if you pleaſe, and 'a glaſs of water: That's all I can ſwallow at pre-'ſent. I am really very much diſcompoſed. Saw you

not

'not how bad I was?—Indignation only could have 'ſupported my ſpirits!—

'I have no objections to his dining with you, Ma-'dam;' added ſhe, in reply, I ſuppoſe, to a farther queſtion of the ſame nature—'But I will not ſtay 'a night in the houſe, where he lodges.'

I preſume Miſs Rawlins had told her, that ſhe would not ſtay dinner—for ſhe ſaid, 'Let me not 'deprive Mrs. Moore of your company, Miſs Raw-'lins. You will not be diſpleaſed with his talk. He 'can have no deſign upon you.'

Then I ſuppoſe they pleaded what I might ſay behind her back, to make my own Story good:—'I 'care not what he ſays, or what he thinks of me. 'Repentance and Amendment are all the harm I wiſh 'him, whatever becomes of me!'

By her accent, ſhe wept when ſhe ſpoke theſe laſt words.

They came out both of them wiping their eyes; and would have perſuaded me to relinquiſh the lodgings, and to depart till her Uncle's friend came. But I knew better. I did not care to truſt the devil, well as ſhe and Miſs Howe ſuppoſe me to be acquainted with him, for finding her out again, if once more ſhe eſcaped me.

What I am moſt afraid of, is that ſhe will throw herſelf among her own relations; and if ſhe does, I am confident they will not be able to withſtand her affecting eloquence. But yet, as thou'lt ſee, the Captain's Letter to me is admirably calculated to obviate my apprehenſions on this ſcore; particularly in that paſſage, where it is ſaid, that her Uncle thinks not himſelf at liberty to correſpond directly with her, or to receive applications from her—*But thro' Captain Tomlinſon*, as is ſtrongly implied (*a*).

I muſt own (notwithſtanding the Revenge I have ſo ſolemnly vowed) that I would very fain have made

(*a*) See p. 101, 102.

for

for her a merit with myſelf *in her reſtoring favour*, and have owed as little as poſſible to the mediation of Captain Tomlinſon. My pride was concerned in this: And this was one of my reaſons for not bringing him with me. Another was; That, if I were obliged to have recourſe to his aſſiſtance, I ſhould be better able (by viſiting her without him) to direct him what to ſay or to do, as I ſhould find out the turn of her humour.

I was, however, glad at my heart, that Mrs. Moore came up ſo ſeaſonably with notice, that dinner was ready. The fair Fugitive was all in Alt. She had the game in her own hands; and by giving me ſo good an excuſe for withdrawing, I had time to ſtrengthen myſelf; the Captain had time to come; and the Lady to cool. Shakſpeare adviſes well,

Oppoſe not Rage, whilſt Rage is in its force;
But give it way awhile, and let it waſte.
The riſing deluge is not ſtopt with dams;
Thoſe it o'erbears, and drowns the hope of harveſt:
But, wiſely manag'd, its divided ſtrength
Is ſluic'd in channels, and ſecurely drain'd:
And when its force is ſpent, and unſupply'd,
The reſidue with mounds may be reſtrain'd,
And dry ſhod we may paſs the naked ford.

I went down with the women to dinner, Mrs. Moore ſent her fair Boarder up a plate; but ſhe only eat a little bit of bread, and drank a glaſs of water. I doubted not but ſhe would keep her word, when it was once gone out. Is ſhe not an Harlowe?—She ſeems to be enuring herſelf to hardſhips, which at the worſt ſhe can never know; ſince, though ſhe ſhould ultimately refuſe to be obliged to me, or (to expreſs myſelf more ſuitable to my own heart) to *oblige me*, every one who ſees her muſt befriend her.

But let me aſk thee, Belford, Art thou not ſolicitous for me in relation to the contents of the Let-

ter

ter which the angry Beauty had written and diſpatched away by man and horſe; and for what may be Miſs Howe's anſwer to it? Art thou not ready to enquire, Whether it be not likely that Miſs Howe, when ſhe knows of her ſaucy friend's flight, will be concerned about her Letter, which ſhe muſt know could not be at Wilſon's till after that flight; and ſo, probably, would fall into my hands?—

All theſe things, as thou'lt ſee in the ſequel, are provided for with as much contrivance as human foreſight can admit.

I have already told thee that Will. is upon the look out for old Grimes—Old Grimes is it ſeems a goſſiping ſottiſh raſcal; and if Will, can but light of him, I'll anſwer for the conſequence; For has not Will. been my ſervant upwards of ſeven years?

LETTER XI.

Mr. LOVELACE. *In Continuation.*

WE had at dinner, beſides Miſs Rawlins, a young Widow-niece of Mrs. Moore, who is come to ſtay a month with her Aunt—*Bevis* her name; very forward, very lively, and a great admirer of *me*, I aſſure you;—hanging ſmirkingly upon all I ſaid; and prepared to approve of every word before I ſpoke: And who, by the time we had half-dined (by the help of what ſhe had collected before) was as much acquainted with our Story, as either of the other two.

As it behoved me to prepare them in my favour againſt whatever might come from Miſs Howe, I improved upon the hint I had thrown out above-ſtairs againſt that miſchief-making Lady. I repreſented her to be an arrogant creature, revengeful, artful, enterpriſing, and one who, had ſhe been a man, would have ſworn and curſed, and committed Rapes, and played the devil, as far as I knew [*I have no doubt of it, Jack*]: But who, nevertheleſs, by advantage of a

Female

Female Education, and Pride and Inſolence, I believed was *perſonally* virtuous.

Mrs. Bevis allowed, that there was a *vaſt deal* in Education—and in *Pride* too, ſhe ſaid. While Miſs Rawlins came with a prudiſh God forbid, that Virtue ſhould be owing to Education only! However, I declared that Miſs Howe was a ſubtle contriver of miſchief; one who had always been *my* Enemy: Her motives I knew not: But deſpiſed the man whom her Mother was deſirous ſhe ſhould have, one Hickman; altho' I did not directly aver, that ſhe would rather have had me; yet they all immediately imagined that *that* was the ground of her animoſity to me, and of her Envy to my Beloved: And it was pity they ſaid, that ſo fine a young Lady did not ſee thro' ſuch a pretended friend.

And yet nobody [added I] has more reaſon than ſhe to know by *experience* the force of a hatred founded in Envy; as I hinted to *you* above, Mrs. Moore, and to *you*, Miſs Rawlins, in the caſe of her Siſter Arabella.

I had compliments made to my perſon and talents on this occaſion: which gave me a ſingular opportunity of diſplaying my modeſty, by diſclaiming the merit of them, with a *No, indeed!—I ſhould be very vain, Ladies, if I thought ſo.* While thus abuſing myſelf, and exalting Miſs Howe, I got their opinion both for modeſty and generoſity; and had all the graces which I diſclaimed thrown in upon me beſides.

In ſhort, they even oppreſſed that modeſty, which (to ſpeak modeſtly of myſelf) their praiſes *created*, by diſbelieving all I ſaid againſt myſelf.

And, truly, I muſt needs ſay, they have almoſt perſuaded even me myſelf, that Miſs Howe is actually in love with me. I have often been willing to hope this. And who knows but ſhe may? The Captain and I have agreed, that it ſhall be ſo inſinuated *occaſionally*—And what's thy opinion, Jack! She certainly

tainly hates Hickman; And girls who are *disengaged* seldom *hate*, tho' they may not *love*: And if she had rather have *another*, why not that *other* ME? For am I not a smart Fellow, and a Rake? And do not your sprightly Ladies love your smart fellows, and your Rakes? And where is the wonder, that the man who could engage the affections of Miss Harlowe, should engage those of a Lady (with her (*a*) *Alas's*) who would be honoured in being deemed her Second?

Nor accuse thou me of SINGULAR vanity in this presumption, Belford. Wert thou to know the secret vanity that lurks in the hearts of those who *disguise* or *cloak it best*, thou wouldst find great reason to acquit, at least, to allow for *me*: Since it is generally the *conscious over-fulness of concei* , that makes the hypocrite most upon his guard to conceal it.—Yet with these fellows, proudly-humble as they are, it will break out sometimes in spite of their cloaks, tho' but in self-denying, compliment-begging Self-degradation.

But now I have undervalued myself, in apologizing to thee on this occasion, let me use another argument in favour of my observation, that the Ladies generally prefer a Rake to a Sober man; and of my presumption upon it, that Miss Howe is in love with me: It is this: Common fame says, That Hickman is a very virtuous, a very innocent fellow—a *male-virgin*, I warrant!—An odd dog I always thought him. Now women, Jack, like not Novices. *Two maidenheads meeting together in Wedlock, the first child must be a Fool*, is their common aphorism. They are pleased with a love of the Sex that is founded in the *knowledge of it*. Reason good; Novices expect more than they can possibly find in the commerce with them. The man who knows them, yet has Ardors for them, to borrow a word from Miss Howe (*b*), tho' those Ardors are generally owing more

(*a*) See p. 43, where Miss Howe says, *Alas! my dear, I knew you loved him!*

(*b*) See Vol. IV. p. 78. 112.

to

to the *devil* within him, than to the witch *without* him, is the man who makes them the higheſt and moſt grateful compliment. He knows *what to expect*, and *with what to be ſatisfied.*

Then the merit of a woman, in ſome caſes, muſt be *Ignorance*, whether *real* or *pretended*. The man, in *theſe* caſes, muſt be an *Adept*. Will it then be wondered at, that a woman prefers a Libertine to a Novice?—While ſhe expects in the one the confidence *ſhe* wants, ſhe conſiders the other and herſelf as two parallel lines, which though they run ſide by ſide, can never meet.

Yet in this the Sex is generally miſtaken too; for theſe ſheepiſh fellows are ſly. I myſelf was modeſt once; and this, as I have elſewhere hinted to thee (*a*), has better enabled me to judge of both Sexes.

But to proceed with my narrative:

Having thus prepared every one againſt any Letter ſhould come from Miſs Howe, and againſt my Beloved's meſſenger returns, I thought it proper to conclude that ſubject with a hint, that my Spouſe could not bear to have any-thing ſaid *that reflected upon Miſs Howe*; and, with a deep ſigh, added, that I had been made very unhappy more than once by the ill-will of Ladies whom I had never offended.

The widow Bevis believed, that might very eaſily be.

'Theſe hints within-doors, joined with others to Will. both without and within [For I intend he ſhall fall in love with widow Moore's maid, and have ſaved one hundred pounds in my ſervice, at leaſt] will be great helps, as things may happen.

(*a*) See Vol. III. p. 106.

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LETTER XII.

Mr. LOVELACE. *In Continuation.*

WE had hardly dined, when my coachman, who kept a look-out for Captain Tomlinſon, as Will. did for old Grimes, conducted hither that worthy gentleman, attended by one ſervant, *both* on horſeback. He alighted. I went out to meet him at the door.

Thou knoweſt his ſolemn appearance, and unbluſhing freedom; and yet canſt not imagine what a dignity the raſcal aſſumed, nor how reſpectful to him I was.

I led him into the parlour, and preſented him to the women, and them to him. I thought it highly imported me (as they might ſtill have ſome diffidences about our Marriage, from my Fair-one's home puſhed queſtions on that head) to convince them entirely of the truth of all I had aſſerted. And how could I do this better, than by dialoguing a little with him before them?

Dear Captain, I thought you long; for I have had a terrible conflict with my Spouſe.

Capt. I am ſorry that I am later than my intention —My account with my Banker—[There's a dog, Jack!] took me up longer time to adjuſt than I had foreſeen [all the time pulling down and ſtroking his ruffles]: For there was a ſmall difference between us —only twenty pounds, indeed, which I had taken no account of.

The raſcal has not ſeen twenty pounds of his own theſe ten years.

Then had we between us the characters of the Harlowe family; I railed againſt them all; the Captain taking his dear friend Mr. John Harlowe's part; with a *Not ſo faſt!—Not ſo faſt, young Gentleman!*— and the like free aſſumptions.

He accounted for *their* animoſity by *my* defiances:

No

No good family, having ſuch a charming daughter, would care to be *defied*, inſtead of *courted*: He *muſt* ſpeak his mind: Never was a double-tongued man.—He appealed to the Ladies, if he were not right?

He got them of his ſide.

The correction I had given the Brother, he told me, muſt have aggravated matters.

How valiant this made me look to the women!—The Sex love us mettled fellows at their hearts.

Be that as it would, I ſhould never love any of the family but my Spouſe; and wanting nothing from them, I would not, but for *her* ſake, have gone ſo far as I *had* gone towards a Reconciliation.

This was very good of me; Mrs. Moore ſaid.

Very good indeed; Miſs Rawlins.

Good;—It is *more* than good; it is very generous; ſaid the widow.

Capt. Why ſo it is, I muſt needs ſay: For I am ſenſible, that Mr. Lovelace has been rudely treated by them all—More rudely, than it could have been imagined a man of his *quality* and *ſpirit* would have put up with. But then Sir [turning to me] I think you are amply rewarded in ſuch a Lady; and that you ought to forgive the Father for the Daughter's ſake.

Mrs. Moore. Indeed ſo I think.

Miſs R. So muſt every one think, who has ſeen the Lady.

Widow B. A fine Lady, to be ſure! But ſhe has a violent ſpirit; and ſome very odd humours too, by what I have heard. The value of good huſbands is not known till they are loſt!

Her conſcience then drew a ſigh from her.

Lovel. Nobody muſt reflect upon my angel—An angel ſhe is—Some little blemiſhes, indeed, as to her over-haſty ſpirit, and as to her unforgiving temper. But this ſhe has from the Harlowes; inſtigated too by *that* Miſs Howe.—But her innumerable excellencies are all her own.

Capt.

Capt. Ay, talk of ſpirit, There's a ſpirit, now you have named Miſs Howe! [And ſo I led him to confirm all I had ſaid of that vixen] Yet ſhe was to be pitied too; looking with meaning at me.

As I have already hinted, I had before agreed with him to impute ſecret Love *occaſionally* to Miſs Howe, as the beſt means to invalidate all that might come from her in my diſfavour.

Capt. Mr. Lovelace, but that I know your modeſty, or *you* could give a reaſon—

Lovel. Looking down, and very modeſt—I can't think ſo, Captain—But let us call another cauſe.

Every woman preſent could look me in the face, ſo baſhful was I.

Capt. Well, but as to our *preſent* ſituation—Only it mayn't be proper—looking upon me, and round upon the women.

Lovel. O Captain, you may ſay any thing before this company—Only, Andrew [to my new ſervant, who attended us at table] do you withdraw: This good girl [looking at the maid-ſervant] will help us to all we want.

Away went Andrew: He wanted not his cue; and the maid ſeemed pleaſed at my Honour's preference of her.

Capt. As to our *preſent* ſituation, I ſay, Mr. Lovelace—Why, Sir, we ſhall be all *untwiſted*, let me tell you, if my friend Mr. John Harlowe were to know what *that* is. He would as much queſtion the truth of your being married, as the reſt of the family do.

Here the women perked up their ears; and were all ſilent attention.

Capt. I aſked you before for particulars, Mr. Lovelace; but you *declined giving them.*—Indeed it may not be *proper* for me to be acquainted with them.—But I muſt own, that it is paſt my comprehenſion, that a wife can reſent any-thing a huſband can do (that is not a breach of the peace) ſo far as to think herſelf juſtified for *eloping* from him. *Lovel.*

Lovel. Captain Tomlinſon:—Sir—I do aſſure you, that I ſhall be offended—I ſhall be extremely concerned—if I hear that word *Eloping* mentioned again—

Capt. Your Nicety, and your Love, Sir, may make you take offence—But it is my way to call every-thing by its proper name, let who will be offended—

Thou canſt not imagine, Belford, how brave, and how independent, the raſcal looked.

Capt. When, *young Gentleman*, you ſhall think proper to give us particulars, we will find a word for this raſh act in ſo admirable a Lady, that ſhall pleaſe you better—You ſee, Sir, that, being the Repreſentative of my dear friend Mr. John Harlowe, I ſpeak as freely as I ſuppoſe *he* would do, if preſent. But you bluſh, Sir—I beg your pardon, Mr. Lovelace: It becomes not a modeſt man to pry into thoſe Secrets, which a modeſt man cannot reveal.

I did not bluſh, Jack; but denied not the compliment, and looked down: The women ſeemed delighted with my modeſty: But the widow Bevis was more inclined to laugh at me, than praiſe me for it.

Capt. Whatever be the cauſe of this ſtep (I will not again, Sir, call it *Elopement*, ſince that harſh word wounds your tenderneſs) I cannot but expreſs my ſurprize upon it, when I recollect the affectionate behaviour, to which I was witneſs between you, when I attended you laſt. *Over-love*, Sir, I think you once mention—but *Over-love* [ſmiling] give me leave to ſay, Sir, it is an odd cauſe of quarrel—Few Ladies—

Lovel. Dear Captain! And I tried to bluſh.

The women alſo tried; and, being more uſed to it, ſucceeded better.—Mrs. Bevis indeed has a red-hot countenance, and always bluſhes.

Miſs R. It ſignifies nothing to mince the matter: But the Lady above as good as denies her Marriage. You *know*, Sir, that ſhe does; turning to me.

Capt. Denies her Marriage! Heavens! how then have I impoſed upon my dear friend Mr. John Harlowe!

Lovel. Poor dear!—But let not her *Veracity* be called in queſtion. She would not be guilty of a wilful untruth for the world.

Then I had all their praiſes again.

Lovel. Dear creature!—She thinks ſhe has reaſon for her denial. You know, Mrs. Moore; you know, Miſs Rawlins; what I owned to you above as to my vow—

I looked down, and, as once before, turned round my diamond ring.

Mrs. Moore looked awry; and with a leer at Miſs Rawlins, as to her partner in the hinted-at reference.

Miſs Rawlins looked down as well as I; her eye-lids half cloſed, as if mumbling a Pater-noſter, meditating her Snuff-box, the diſtance between her noſe and chin lengthened by a cloſe-ſhut mouth.

She put me in mind of the pious Mrs. Fetherſtone at Oxford, whom I pointed out to thee once, among other groteſque figures, at St. Mary's church, whither we went to take a view of her two Siſters: Her eyes ſhut, not daring to truſt her heart with them open; and but juſt half-rearing her lids, to ſee who the next-comer was; and falling them again, when her curioſity was ſatisfied.

The widow Bevis gazed, as if on the hunt for a ſecret.

The Captain looked archly, as if half in poſſeſſion of one.

Mrs. Moore at laſt broke the baſhful ſilence. Mrs. Lovelace's behaviour, ſhe ſaid, could be no otherwiſe ſo well accounted for, as by the ill-offices of *that* Miſs Howe; and by the ſeverity of her relations; which might but too probably have affected her head a little at times: Adding, that it was very generous in me to give way to the ſtorm when it was up, rather than to exaſperate at ſuch a time.

But let me tell you, Sirs, ſaid the widow Bevis, that is not what one huſband in a thouſand would have done. I de-

I desired, that *no part of this conversation might be hinted to my Spouse*; and looked still more bashfully. Her great fault, I must own, was over-delicacy.

The Captain leered round him; and said, He believed he could guess from the hints I had given him in town (of my *over-love*) and from what had now passed, that we had not consummated our Marriage.

O Jack! how sheepishly then looked, or endeavoured to look, thy friend! how primly Goody Moore! how affectedly Miss Rawlins!—while the honest widow Bevis gazed around her fearless; and though only simpering with her mouth, her eyes laughed outright, and seemed to challenge a laugh from every eye in the company.

He observed, that I was a phœnix of a man, if so; and he could not but hope, that all matters would be happily accommodated in a day or two; and that then he should have the pleasure to aver to her Uncle, that he was present, as he might say, on our wedding-day.

The women seemed all to join in the same hope.

Ah, Captain! Ah, Ladies!—how happy should I be, if I could bring my dear Spouse to be of the same mind!

It would be a very happy conclusion of a very knotty affair, said widow Bevis; and I see not why we may not make this very night a merry one.

The Captain superciliously smiled at me. He saw plainly enough, he said, that we had been at *childrens play* hitherto. A man of my character, who could give way to such a caprice as This, must have a prodigious value for his Lady. But one thing he would venture to tell me; and that was This—That, however desirous young skittish Ladies might be to have their way in this particular, it was a very bad setting-out for the man; as it gave his Bride a very high proof of the power she had over him: And he would engage, that no woman, *thus* humoured, ever valued the man the more for it; but very much the contrary—And there were *reasons to be given why she should not.*

Well, well, Captain, no more of this ſubject before the Ladies.—*One* feels [ſhrugging my ſhoulders in a baſhful *try-to-bluſh* manner] that *one* is *ſo* ridiculous—I have been puniſhed enough for my tender folly.

Miſs Rawlins had taken her fan, and would needs hide her face behind it—I ſuppoſe becauſe her bluſh was not quite ready.

Mrs. Moore hemmed, and looked down; and by that, gave her's over.

While the jolly Widow, laughing out, praiſed the Captain as one of Hudibras's metaphyſicians, repeating,

He knew what's what, and that's as high
As metaphyſic wit can fly.

This made Miſs Rawlins bluſh indeed:—Fie, fie, Mrs. Bevis! cried ſhe, unwilling, I ſuppoſe, to be thought abſolutely ignorant.

Upon the whole, I began to think, that I had not made a bad exchange of our profeſſing Mother, for the unprofeſſing Mrs. Moore. And indeed the Women and I, and my Beloved too, all mean the ſame thing: We only differ about the manner of coming at the propoſed end.

LETTER XIII.

Mr. LOVELACE. *In Continuation.*

IT was now high time to acquaint my Spouſe, that Captain Tomlinſon was come. And the rather, as the maid told us, that the Lady had aſked her, if ſuch a gentleman [deſcribing him] was not in the parlour?

Mrs. Moore went up, and requeſted, in my name, that ſhe would give us audience.

But ſhe returned, reporting my Beloved's deſire, that Captain Tomlinſon would excuſe her for the preſent. She was very ill. Her ſpirits were too weak

to enter into converſation with him; and ſhe muſt lie down.

I was vexed, and at firſt extremely diſconcerted. The Captain was vexed too. And my concern, thou mayeſt believe, was the greater on *his account*.

She had been very much fatigued, I own. Her fits in the morning muſt have diſordered her: And ſhe had carried her reſentment ſo high, that it was the leſs wonder ſhe ſhould find herſelf low, when her raiſed ſpirits had ſubſided. *Very* low, I may ſay; if ſinkings are proportioned to riſings; for ſhe had been lifted up above the ſtandard of a common mortal.

The Captain, however, ſent up his own name, that if he could be admitted to drink one diſh of Tea with her, he ſhould take it for a favour: and would go to town, and diſpatch ſome neceſſary buſineſs, in order, if poſſible, to leave his morning free to attend her.

But ſhe pleaded a violent head ach; and Mrs. Moore confirmed the plea to be juſt.

I would have had the Captain lodge there that night, as well in compliment to him, as introductory to my intention of entering myſelf upon my new-taken apartment: But his hours were of too much importance to him to ſtay the evening.

It was indeed very inconvenient for him, he ſaid, to return in the morning; but he is willing to do all in his power to heal this breach, and that as well for the ſakes of me and my Lady, as for that of his dear friend Mr. John Harlowe; who muſt not know how far this miſunderſtanding had gone. He would therefore only drink one diſh of Tea with the Ladies and me.

And accordingly, after he had done ſo, and I had had a little private converſation with him, he hurried away.

His fellow had given him, in the interim, a high character to Mrs. Moore's ſervants: And this reported by the Widow Bevis (who, being no proud woman, is *hail fellow, well met*, as the ſaying is, with all her

Aunt's

Aunt's ſervants) he was a *fine* gentleman, a *diſcreet* gentleman, a man of *ſenſe* and *breeding*, with them all: And it was pity, that, with ſuch great buſineſs upon his hands, he ſhould be obliged to come again.

My life for yours, audibly wiſpered the Widow Bevis, There is *humour* as well as *head-ach* in Somebody's declining to ſee this worthy gentleman.—Ah, Lord! how happy might ſome people be if they would!

No perfect happineſs in this world, ſaid I, very gravely, and with a ſigh; for the widow muſt know that I heard her. If we have not *real* unhappineſs, we can make it, even from the overflowings of our good fortune.

Very true, and, Very true, the two Widows. A charming obſervation! Mrs. Bevis. Miſs Rawlins ſmiled *her* aſſent to it; and I thought ſhe called me in her heart, Charming man! For ſhe profeſſes to be a great admirer of moral obſervations.

I had hardly taken leave of the Captain, and ſat down again with the women, when Will. came; and calling me out, 'Sir, Sir' ſaid he, grinning with a familiarity in his looks as if what he had to ſay entitled him to take liberties; 'I have got the fellow 'down!—I have got old Grimes—Hah, hah, hah, 'hah!—He is at the Lower-Flaſk—Almoſt in the 'condition of *David's Sow*, and pleaſe your Honour '—[The dog himſelf not much better] Here is his 'Letter—from—from Miſs Howe—ha, ha, ha, ha,' laughed the varlet; holding it faſt, as if to make conditions with me, and to excite my praiſes, as well as my impatience.

I could have knocked him down; but he would have his *Say* out—'Old Grimes knows not that I 'have the letter—I muſt get back to him before he 'miſſes it—I only make a pretence to go out for a 'few minutes—But—but'—and then the dog laughed

again—'He *muſt* ſtay—Old Grimes *muſt* ſtay—till I 'go back to pay the reckoning'

D—n the prater;—Grining raſcal!—The Letter! —The Letter!—

He gathered in his *wide mothe*, as he calls it, and gave me the Letter; but with a *ſtrut*, rather than a *bow*; and then ſidled off like one of Widow Sorlings's dunghill cocks, exulting after a great feat performed. And all the time that I was holding up the billet to the light, to try to get at its contents without breaking the ſeal [for, diſpatched in a hurry, it had no cover] there ſtood he, laughing, ſhrugging, playing off his legs; now ſtroking his ſhining chin; now turning his hat upon his thumb! then leering in my face, flouriſhing with his head—O Chriſt! now-and-then cried the raſcal—

What joy has this dog in miſchief!—More than I can have in the completion of my moſt favourite purpoſes!—Theſe fellows are ever happier than their maſters.

I was once thinking to rumple up this billet till I had broken the Seal. *Young* families [Miſs Howe's is not an antient one] love oſtentatious Sealings: And it might have been ſuppoſed to have been ſqueezed in pieces, in Old Grimes's breeches pocket. But I was glad to be *ſaved* the guilt as well as ſuſpicion of having a hand in ſo dirty a trick; for thus much of the contents (enough for my purpoſe) I was enabled to ſcratch out in character, without it; the folds depriving me only of a few connecting words; which I have ſupplied between hooks.

My Miſs Harlowe, thou knoweſt, had *before* changed her name to *Miſs* Lætitia Beaumont. Another *alias* now, Jack, to it; for this billet was directed to her by the name of *Mrs.* Harriot Lucas. I have learned her to be half a Rogue, thou ſeeſt.

'I

'I Congratulate you, my dear, with all my heart
'and ſoul, upon [your eſcape] from the villain.
'[I long] for the particulars of all. [My Mother]
'is out; But, expecting her return every minute, I
'diſpatched [your] meſſenger inſtantly. [I will en-
'deavour to come at] Mrs. Townſend without loſs
'of time; and will write at large in a day or two,
'if in that time I can ſee her. [Mean time I] am
'exceſſively uneaſy for a Letter I ſent you yeſterday
'by Collins, [who muſt have left it at] Wilſon's
'after you got away. [It is of very] great import-
'ance. [I hope the] villain has it not. I would
'not for the world [that he ſhould.] Immediately
'ſend for it, if by ſo doing, the place you are at
'[will not be] diſcovered. If he has it, let me know
'it by ſome way [out of] hand. If not, you need
'not ſend.

June 9. *Ever, Ever Your's.*

A. H.

O Jack, what heart's-eaſe does this *interception* give me!—I ſent the raſcal back with the Letter to old Grimes, and charged him to drink no deeper. He owned, that he was *half ſeas over*, as he phraſed it.

Dog! ſaid I, are you not to court one of Mrs. Moore's maids to-night?—

Cry your mercy, Sir?—I will be ſober.—I had forgot that—But old Grimes is plaguy tough—I thought I ſhould never have got him down.

Away, villain!—Let old Grimes come; and on horſeback too, to the door—

He ſhall, and pleaſe your honour, if I can get him on the ſaddle, and if he can ſit—

And charge him not to have alighted, nor to have ſeen *any* body—

Enough, Sir! familiarly nodding his head, to ſhew he took me. And away went the villain—Into the parlour, to the women, I.

In a quarter of an hour came old Grimes on horſe-back, waving to his ſaddle-bow, now on this ſide, now on that; his head, at others, joining to that of his more ſober beaſt.

It looked very well to the women, that I made no effort to ſpeak to old Grimes (tho' I wiſhed *before them*, that I knew the contents of what he brought); but, on the contrary, deſired that they would inſtantly let my ſpouſe know that her meſſenger was returned.

Down ſhe flew, violently as ſhe had the head-ach!

O how I prayed for an opportunity to be revenged of her for the ingrateful trouble ſhe had given to her Uncle's friend!

She took the Letter from old Grimes with her own hands, and retired to an inner parlour to read it.

She preſently came out again to the fellow, who had much ado to ſit his horſe—Here is your money, friend. I thought you long. But what ſhall I do to get ſomebody to go to town immediately for me? I ſee *you* cannot.

Old Grimes took his money; let fall his hat in d'offing it; had it given him; and rode away; his eyes iſing-glaſs, and ſet in his head, as I ſaw thro' the window; and in a manner ſpeechleſs; all his language hiccough. My dog needed not to have gone ſo deep with this *tough* old Grimes. But the raſcal was in his kingdom with him.

The Lady applied to Mrs. Moore: She mattered not the price. Could a man and horſe be engaged for her?—Only to go for a Letter left for her, at one Mr. Wilſon's in Pall-mall.

A poor neighbour was hired. A horſe procured for him. He had his directions.

In vain did I endeavour to engage my Beloved, when ſhe was below. Her head-ach, I ſuppoſe, returned. She, like the reſt of her Sex, can be ill or well when ſhe pleaſes.

I ſee her drift, thought I: It is to have all her lights

from

from Miſs Howe before ſhe reſolves; and to take her meaſures accordingly.

Up ſhe went, expreſſing great impatience about the Letter ſhe had ſent for; and deſired Mrs. Moore to let her know if I offered to ſend any of my ſervants to town—To get at the Letter, I ſuppoſe, was her fear: But ſhe might have been quite eaſy on that head; and yet perhaps would not, had ſhe known, that the worthy Capt. Tomlinſon (who will be in town before her meſſenger) will leave there the important Letter: Which I hope will help to pacify her, and reconcile her to me.

O Jack! Jack! thinkeſt thou that I will take all this roguiſh pains, and be ſo often called villain, for nothing?

But yet, is it not taking pains to come at the fineſt creature in the world, not for a *tranſitory moment* only, but for one of our lives! The ſtruggle only, Whether I am to have her in *my own way*, or in *her's*?

But now I know thou wilt be frightened out of thy wits for me—What, Lovelace! wouldeſt thou let her have a letter that will inevitably blow thee up; and blow up the Mother, and all her Nymphs!—yet not intend to reform, nor intend to marry?

Patience, puppy? Canſt thou not truſt thy maſter?

LETTER XIV.

Mr. LOVELACE. *In Continuation.*

I Went up to my new-taken apartment, and fell to writing in character, as uſual. I thought I had made good my quarters. But the cruel creature, underſtanding that I intended to take up my lodgings there, declared with ſo much violence againſt it, that I was obliged to ſubmit, and to accept of another lodging, about twelve doors off, which Mrs. Moore recommended. And all the advantage I could obtain

was, that Will. unknown to my Spouſe, and for fear of a freak, ſhould lie in the houſe.

Mrs. Moore, indeed, was unwilling to diſoblige *either* of us. But Miſs Rawlins was of opinion, that nothing more ought to be allowed me: And yet Mrs. Moore owned, that the Refuſal was a ſtrange piece of tyranny to an huſband, if I *were* a huſband.

I had a good mind to make Miſs Rawlins ſmart for it. Come and ſee Miſs Rawlins, Jack—If thou likeſt her, I'll get her for thee with a *wet finger*, as the ſaying is!

The Widow Bevis indeed ſtickled hard for me [An innocent or injured man will have friends everywhere]. She ſaid, That to *bear much* with ſome wives, was to be obliged to bear more: And I reflected, with a ſigh, *that tame ſpirits muſt always be impoſed upon*. And then, in my heart, I renewed my vows of Revenge upon this haughty and perverſe Beauty.

The ſecond fellow came back from town about nine o'clock, with Miſs Howe's Letter of Wedneſday laſt, 'Collins, *it ſeems*, when he left it, had deſired, that 'it might be ſafely and ſpeedily delivered into Miſs 'Lætitia Beaumont's own hands, But Wilſon, un-'derſtanding, that neither ſhe nor I were in town '[*He could not know of our difference thou muſt think*] 'reſolved to take care of it till our return, in order to 'give it into one of our own hands; and now deli-'vered it to her meſſenger.'

This was told *her*. Wilſon, I doubt not, is in her favour upon it.

She took the Letter with great eagerneſs; opened it in a hurry [am glad ſhe did; Yet, I believe, all was right] before Mrs. Moore and Mrs. Bevis [Miſs Rawlins was gone home]; and ſaid, She would not for the world that I ſhould have had that Letter, for the ſake of her dear friend the writer; who had written to her very uneaſily about it.

Her *dear friend!* repeated Mrs. Bevis, when ſhe told

told me this:—Such miſchief-makers are always deemed *dear friends* till they are found out!

The Widow ſays, that I am the fineſt gentleman ſhe ever beheld.

I have found a warm kiſs now-and-then very kindly taken.

I might be a very wicked fellow, Jack, if I were to do all the miſchief in my power. But I am evermore for quitting a too eaſy prey to *reptile Rakes*. What but difficulty (tho' the Lady is an Angel) engages me to ſo much perſeverance here? And *here*, *Conquer or die!* is now the determination!

*** ***

I HAVE juſt now parted with this honeſt Widow. She called upon me at my new lodgings. I told her, that I ſaw I muſt be further obliged to her in the courſe of this difficult affair. She muſt allow me to make her a handſome preſent when all was happily over. But I deſired, that ſhe would take no notice of what ſhould paſs between us, *not even to her Aunt*; for that ſhe, as I ſaw, was in the power of Miſs Rawlins: And Miſs Rawlins being a maiden gentlewoman, knew not the *right* and the *fit* in matrimonial matters, as ſhe, my dear widow, did.

Very true: How *ſhould* ſhe? ſaid Mrs. Bevis, proud of knowing—nothing! But, for her part, ſhe deſired no preſent. It was enough if ſhe could contribute to reconcile Man and Wife, and diſappoint miſchief-makers. She doubted not, that ſuch an envious creature as Miſs Howe was glad that Mrs. Lovelace had eloped—Jealouſy and Love *was* Old Nick!

See, Belford, how charmingly things work between me and my new acquaintance the Widow!—Who knows, but that ſhe may, after a little farther intimacy (tho' I am baniſhed the houſe on nights) contrive a midnight viſit for me to my Spouſe, when all is ſtill and faſt aſleep?

Where can a woman be ſafe, who has once entered the Liſts with a contriving and intrepid Lover?

But as to this *Letter*, methinks thou ſayeſt, of Miſs Howe?

I knew thou wouldeſt be uneaſy for me: But did not I tell thee that I had provided for every-thing? That I always took care to keep Seals entire, and to preſerve Covers (*a*)? Was it not eaſy then, thinkeſt thou, to contrive a ſhorter Letter out of a longer; and to copy the very words?

I can tell thee, it was ſo well ordered, that, not being ſuſpected to have been in my hands, it was not eaſy to find me out. Had it been my Beloved's hand, there would have been no imitating it, for ſuch a length. Her delicate and even mind is ſeen in the very cut of her letters. Miſs Howe's hand is no bad one; but it is not ſo equal and regular. That little devil's natural impatience hurrying on her fingers, gave, I ſuppoſe, from the beginning, her hand-writing, as well as the reſt of her, its fits and ſtarts, and thoſe peculiarities, which, like ſtrong muſcular lines in a face, neither the pen, nor the pencil, can miſs.

Haſt thou a mind to ſee what it was I *permitted* Miſs Howe to write to her lovely friend? Why then read it here, as extracted from her's of Wedneſday laſt, with a few additions of my own. The additions underſcored.

My deareſt Friend,

YOU will perhaps think, that I have been too long ſilent. But I had begun two Letters at different times ſince my laſt, and written a great deal each time; and with ſpirit enough, I aſſure you; incenſed as I was againſt the abominable wretch you are with, particularly on reading yours of the 21ſt of the paſt month.

The FIRST I intended to keep open till I could give you ſome account of my proceedings with Mrs.

(*a*) See p. 50.

Townſend. I was ſome days before I ſaw her: And this intervenient ſpace giving me time to reperuſe what I had written, I thought it proper to lay that aſide, and to write in a ſtyle a little leſs fervent: for you would have blamed me, I knew, for the freedom of ſome of my expreſſions [Execrations if you pleaſe.] And when I had gone a good way in the SECOND, the change in your proſpects, on his communicating to you Miſs Montague's Letter, and his better behaviour, occaſioning a change in your mind, I laid that aſide alſo: And in this uncertainty thought I would wait to ſee the iſſue of affairs between you before I wrote again; believing that all would ſoon be decided one way or other.

* *

Here I was forced to break off. I am *too little* my own miſtreſs—My Mother (*b*) *is* always up and down; and watching as if I were writing to a Fellow. What need I [ſhe aſks me] lock myſelf in (*c*), if I am only reading paſt correſpondencies? For that is my pretence, when ſhe comes poking in with her face ſharpened to an edge, as I may ſay, by curioſity that gives her more pain than pleaſure—The Lord forgive me; but I believe I ſhall huff her next time ſhe comes in.

* *

Do you forgive me too my dear. My Mother ought; becauſe ſhe ſays I am my Father's girl; and becauſe I am ſure I am her's.

Upon my life, my dear, I am ſometimes of opinion, that this vile man was capable of meaning you diſhonour. When I look back upon his paſt conduct, I cannot help thinking ſo: What a villain, if ſo!—But now I hope, and verily believe, that he has laid aſide ſuch thoughts. My reaſons for both opinions I will give you.

For the firſt; to wit, that he had it once in his head to take you at advantage if he could, I conſider (d), that

(*b*) See p. 31. (*c*) P. 3. (*d*) P. 38.

Pride, Revenge, and a delight to tread in unbeaten paths, are principal ingredients in the character of this finiſhed Libertine. He hates all your family, yourſelf excepted—Yet is a Savage in Love. His Pride, and the credit which a few plauſible qualities ſprinkled among his odious ones, have given him, have ſecured him too good a reception from our eye-judging, our undiſtinguiſhing, our ſelf-flattering, our too-confiding Sex, to make aſſiduity and obſequiouſneſs, and a conqueſt of his unruly paſſions, any part of his ſtudy.

He has ſome reaſon for his animoſity to all the men, and to one woman, of your family. He has always ſhewn you and his own family too, that he prefers his Pride to his Intereſt. He is a declared Marriage-hater; a notorious Intriguer; full of his inventions, and glorying in them. As his vanity had made him imagine, that no woman could be proof againſt his Love, no wonder that he ſtruggled like a Lion held in toils (*e*), againſt a paſſion that he thought not returned (*f*). Hence, perhaps, it is not difficult to believe, that it became poſſible for ſuch a wretch as this to give way to his old prejudices againſt Marriage; and to that Revenge *which* had always been a firſt paſſion with him (*g*).

And hence we may account for his delays, his teazeing ways; his bringing you to bear with his lodging in the ſame houſe; his making you paſs to the people of it as his Wife; his bringing you into the company of his Libertine companions; the attempt of impoſing upon you that Miſs Partington for a bedfellow, &c.

My reaſons for a contrary opinion; to wit, that he is now reſolved to do you all the juſtice in his power to do you; are theſe: That he ſees that all his own family (*h*) have warmly engaged themſelves in your cauſe: That the horrid wretch loves you; with ſuch a Love, *however*, as Herod loved his Mariamne: That, on enquiry, I find it to be true, that Counſellor Wil-

(*e*) See p. 40. (*f*) Ibid. (*g*) Ibid. (*h*) P. 42.

liams

liams (whom Mr. Hickman knows to be a man of eminence in his profeſſion) has actually as good as finiſhed the Settlements: That two draughts of them have been made; one avowedly to be ſent to *this very* Captain Tomlinſon: And I find, that a Licence has actually been more than once endeavoured to be obtained, and that difficultes have hitherto been made equally to Lovelace's vexation and diſappointment. My Mother's Proctor, who is very intimate with the Proctor applied to by the wretch, has come at this information, in confidence; and hints, that as Mr. Lovelace is a man of high fortunes, theſe difficulties will probably be got over.

I had once reſolved to make ſtrict enquiry about Tomlinſon; and ſtill, if you will, your Uncle's favourite Houſekeeper may be ſounded at diſtance.

I know that the matter is ſo laid (*i*), that Mrs. Hodges is ſuppoſed to know nothing of the treaty ſet on foot by means of Capt. Tomlinſon. But your Uncle is an old man (*k*); and old men imagine themſelves to be under obligation to their paramours, if younger than themſelves, and ſeldom keep any-thing from their knowlege.—Yet, methinks, there can be no need; ſince Tomlinſon, as you deſcribe him, is ſo good a man, and ſo much of a gentleman; the end to be anſwered by his being an impoſtor ſo much more than neceſſary, if Lovelace has villainy in his head.—And thus what he communicated to you of Mr. Hickman's application to your Uncle, and of Mrs. Norton's to your Mother (ſome of which particulars I am ſatisfied his vile agent Joſeph Leman could not reveal to his vile employer); his puſhing on the Marriage-day, in the name of your Uncle; which it could not anſwer any wicked purpoſe for him to do; and what he writes of your Uncle's propoſal, to have it thought that you were married from the time that you had lived in one houſe together; and that to be made to

(*i*) See p. 35. (*k*) P. 36.

agree

agree with the time of Mr. Hickman's visit to your Uncle; the insisting on a trusty person's being present at the Ceremony, at that Uncle's nomination—These things make me *assured that he now at last means honourably.*

But if any unexpected delays should happen on his side, acquaint me, my dear, with the very Street where Mrs. Sinclair lives; and where Mrs. Fretchville's house is situated (which I cannot find that you have ever mentioned in your former letters—which is a little odd); and I will make strict enquiries of them, and of Tomlinson too; and I will (if your heart will let you take my advice) soon procure you a refuge from him with Mrs. Townsend.

But why do I now, when you seem to be in so good a train, puzzle and perplex you with my retrospections? And yet they may be of use to you, if any delay happen on his part.

But that I think cannot well be. What you have therefore now to do, is so to behave to this proud-spirited wretch, as may banish from his mind all remembrance of past disobligations (*l*), and to receive his addresses, as those of a betrothed Lover. You will incur the censure of Prudery and Affectation, if you keep him at that distance which you have hitherto *kept him at*. His sudden (and as suddenly recovered) illness has given him an opportunity to find out that you love him [Alas! my dear, I knew you loved him!] He has seemed to change his nature, and is all love and gentleness. *And no more quarrels now, I beseech you.*

I am very angry with him, nevertheless, for the freedoms which he took with your person (m); and I think some guard is necessary, as he is certainly an encroacher. But indeed all men are so; and you are such a charming creature, and have kept him at such a distance!—But no more of this subject. Only, my dear, be not

(*l*) See p. 43. (*m*) Vol. IV. Letter liv.

ever

over-nice, now you are so near the State. You see what difficulties you laid yourself under, when Tomlinson's Letter called you again into *the wretch*'s company.

If you meet with no impediments, no new causes of doubt (*n*), your Reputation in the eye of the world is concerned, that you should be his, *and, as your Uncle rightly judges, be thought to have been his, before now.* And yet, *let me tell you*, I can *hardly* bear *to think*, that these Libertines should be rewarded for their villainy with the best of the Sex, when the worst of it are two good for them.

I shall send this long Letter by Collins (*o*), who changes his day to oblige me. As none of our Letters by Wilson's conveyance have miscarried, when you have been in more apparently disagreeable situations than you are in at present, I *have no doubt* that This will go safe.

Miss Lardner (*p*) (whom you have seen at her cousin Biddulph's) saw you at St. James's Church on Sunday was fortnight. She kept you in her eye during the whole time; but could not once obtain the notice of yours, though she courtsied to you twice. She thought to pay her compliments to you when the Service was over; for she doubted not but you were married—and for an odd reason—Because you came to church by yourself.—Every eye, as usual wherever you are, she said, was upon you: And this seeming to give you hurry, and you being nearer the door than she, you slid out before she could go to you.—But she ordered her servant to follow you till you were housed. This servant saw you step into a chair which waited for you; and you ordered the men to carry you to the place where they took you up. She *describes the house* as a very genteel house, and fit to receive people of fashion: *And what makes me mention this, is, that perhaps you will have a visit from her; or message, at least.*

(*n*) See p. 43. (*o*) P. 45. (*p*) P. 34.

So

So that you have Mr. Doleman's teſtimony to the credit of the houſe and people you are with; and he is a man of fortune, and ſome reputation; formerly a Rake indeed; but married to a woman of family; and having had a palſy blow, one would think, a penitent (*q*). You have *alſo Mr. Mennell's at leaſt paſſive teſtimony; Mr.* Tomlinſon's; *and now, laſtly, Miſs Lardner's; ſo that there will be the leſs need for enquiry: But you know my buſy and inquiſitive temper, as well as my affection for you, and my concern for your honour. But all doubt will ſoon be loſt in certainty.*

Neverthleſs I muſt add, that I would have you command me up, if I can be of the leaſt ſervice or pleaſure to you (*r*). I value not Fame; I value not Cenſure; nor even Life itſelf, I verily think, as I do your Honour and your Friendſhip—For is not your Honour my Honour? And is not your Friendſhip the Pride of my Life?

May Heaven preſerve you, my deareſt creature, in Honour and Safety, is the prayer, the hourly prayer, of

Your ever faithful and affectionate

Thurſday Morn. 5. Anna Howe.

I have written all night. *Excuſe indifferent writeing. My crow quills are worn to the ſtumps, and I muſt get a new ſupply.*

Theſe Ladies always write with crow-quills, Jack.

If thou art capable of taking in all my *providences*, in this Letter, thou wilt admire my ſagacity and contrivance almoſt as much as I do myſelf. Thou ſeeſt, that Miſs Lardner, Mrs. Sinclair, Tomlinſon, Mrs. Fretchville, Mennell, are all mentioned in it. My firſt liberties with her perſon alſo [Modeſty, modeſty, Belford, I doubt, is more confined to Time, Place, and Occaſion, even by the moſt delicate minds, than theſe minds would have it believed to be]. And

(*q*) See p. 33. (*r*) P. 46.

why

why all theſe taken notice of by me from the genuine Letter, but for fear ſome future Letter from the Vixen ſhould eſcape my hands, in which ſhe might refer to theſe names? And if none of them were to have been found in this that is to paſs for her's I might be routed *horſe and foot*, as Lord M. would phraſe it in a like caſe.

Deviliſh hard (and yet I may thank myſelf) to be put to all this plague and trouble:—And for *what* doſt thou aſk?—O Jack, for a triumph of more value to me *beforehand* than an Imperial Crown!—Don't aſk me the value of it a *month hence*. But what indeed is an Imperial Crown itſelf, when a man is uſed to it?

Miſs Howe might well be anxious about the Letter ſhe wrote. Her ſweet friend, from what I have let paſs of hers, has reaſon to rejoice in the thought, that it fell not into my hands.

And now muſt all my contrivances be ſet at work, to intercept the expected Letter from Miſs Howe; which is, as I ſuppoſe, to direct her to a place of ſafety, and out of my knowledge. Mrs. Townſend is, no doubt, in this caſe, to ſmuggle her off: I hope the *villain*, as I am ſo frequently called between theſe two girls, will be able to manage this point.

But what, perhaps, thou aſkeſt, if the Lady ſhould take it into her head, by the connivance of Miſs Rawlins, to quit this houſe privately in the night?

I have thought of this Jack. Does not Will. lie in the houſe? And is not the Widow Bevis my faſt friend?

LETTER XV.

Mr. LOVELACE, *To* JOHN BELFORD, *Eſq.*

Saturday, 6 *o'clock*, *June* 10.

THE Lady gave Will's Sweetheart a Letter laſt night to be carried to the Poſt-houſe, as this morning, directed for Miſs Howe, under cover to

Hickman.

Hickman. I dare say neither Cover nor Letter will be seen to have been opened. The contents but eight lines—To own—'The receipt of her double-dated 'Letter in safety; and referring to a longer Letter, 'which she intends to write, when she shall have a 'quieter heart, and less trembling fingers. But men- 'tions something to have happened [My detecting 'her she means] which has given her very great flut- 'ters, confusions, and apprehensions: But which she 'will wait the issue of [Some hopes for me hence, 'Jack!] before she gives her fresh perturbation or 'concern on her account.—She tells her how impa- 'tient she shall be for her next,' &c.

Now, Belford, I thought it would be but kind in me to save Miss Howe's concern on these alarming hints; since the curiosity of such a spirit must have been prodigiously excited by them. Having therefore so good a copy to imitate, I wrote; and, taking out that of my Beloved, put under the same cover the following short billet; inscriptive and conclusive parts of it in her own words.

Hamstead, Tuesday Evening.

My ever-dear Miss Howe.

A Few lines only, till calmer spirits and quieter fingers be granted me, and till I can get over the shock which your intelligence has given me—To acquaint you—that your kind long Letter of Wednesday, and, as I may say, of Thursday morning, is come safe to my hands. On receipt of yours by my messenger to you, I sent for it from Wilson's. There, thank Heaven! it lay. May that Heaven reward you for all your past, and for all your *intended* goodness to

Your for-ever obliged

Cl. Harlowe.

I took great pains in writing this. It cannot, I hope,

hope, be ſuſpected. Her hand is ſo *very* delicate. Yet hers is written leſs beautifully than ſhe uſually writes: And I hope Miſs Howe will allow ſomewhat for *hurry of ſpirits* and *unſteady fingers*.

My conſideration for Miſs Howe's *eaſe of mind* extended ſtill farther than to the Inſtance I have mentioned.

That this billet might be with her as ſoon as poſſible (and before it could have reached Hickman by the poſt) I diſpatched it away by a ſervant of Mowbray's. Miſs Howe, had there been any failure or delay, might, as thou wilt think, have communicated her anxieties to her fugitive friend; and ſhe *to me* perhaps in a way I ſhould not have been pleaſed with.

Once more wilt thou wonderingly queſtion—All this pains for a ſingle girl?

Yes, Jack—But is not this girl a CLARISSA?—And who knows, but kind Fortune, as a reward for my perſeverance, may toſs me in her charming friend? Leſs likely things have come to paſs, Belford. And to be ſure I ſhall have her, if I reſolve upon it.

LETTER XVI.

Mr. LOVELACE, *To* JOHN BELFORD, *Eſq.*

Eight o'clock, Sat. Morn. June 10.

I AM come back from Mrs. Moore's whither I went in order to attend my Charmer's commands. But no admittance—A very bad night.

Doubtleſs ſhe muſt be as much concerned, that ſhe has carried her reſentments ſo very far, as I have reaſon to be, that I made ſuch poor uſe of the opportunity I had on Wedneſday night.

But now, Jack, for a brief review of my preſent ſituation; and a ſlight hint or two of my precautions.

I have ſeen the women this morning, and find them half-right, half-doubting.

Miſs

Miſs Rawlins's Brother tells her, that ſhe *lives* at Mrs. Moore's.

Mrs. Moore can do nothing without Miſs Rawlins.

People who keep lodgings at public places expect to get by every one who comes into their purlieus. Tho' not permitted to lodge there myſelf, I have engaged all the rooms ſhe has to ſpare, to the very garrets; and *that*, as I have told thee before, for a month certain, and at her own price, board included; my Spouſe's and all: But ſhe muſt not at preſent know it. So I hope I have Mrs. Moore faſt *by the intereſt*.

This, devil-like, is ſuiting temptations to inclinations.

I have always obſerved, and, I believe, I have hinted as much formerly (*a*), that all dealers, tho' but for pins, may be taken in by cuſtomers for pins, ſooner than by a direct bribe of ten times the value; eſpecially if pretenders to conſcience: For the offer of a bribe would not only give room for ſuſpicion, but would ſtartle and alarm their ſcrupulouſneſs; while a high price paid for what you buy, is but ſubmitting to be cheated in the method the perſon makes a profeſſion to get by. Have I not ſaid that human nature is a rogue (*b*)?—And do not I know that it is?

To give a higher inſtance, How many proud Senators in the year 1720, were induced, by preſents or ſubſcriptions of South-Sea-Stock, to contribute to a ſcheme big with national ruin; who yet would have ſpurned the man who ſhould have preſumed to offer them even twice the ſum certain, that they had a chance to gain by the Stock?—But to return to my *review*, and to my *precautions*.

Miſs Rawlins fluctuates, as ſhe hears the Lady's Story, or as ſhe hears mine. Somewhat of an Infidel I doubt, is this Miſs Rawlins. I have not yet conſi-

(*a*) Vol. III. p. 160.
(*b*) Ibid. p. 169. and Vol. IV. p. 55.

dered

dered *her* foible. The next time I ſee her, I will take particular notice of all the moles and freckles in her mind; and then *infer* and *apply*.

The Widow Bevis, as I have told thee, is all my own.

My man Will. lies in the houſe. My other new fellow attends upon *me*; and cannot therefore be quite ſtupid.

Already is Will. over head and ears in love with one of Mrs. Moore's maids. He was ſtruck with her the moment he ſet his eyes upon her. A raw country wench too. But all women, from the Counteſs to the Cook-maid, are put into high good humour with themſelves when a man is taken with them at firſt ſight. Be they ever ſo *plain* [No woman can be *ugly*, Jack!] they'll find twenty good reaſons, beſides the great one *(for Sake's ſake)* by the help of the glaſs without and perhaps in ſpite of it) and conceit within, to juſtify the honeſt fellow's *caption*.

"The Rogue has ſaved 150l. in my Service"—More by 50 than I bid him ſave. No doubt, he thinks he *might* have done ſo; though I believe not worth a groat. "The beſt of Maſters I—Paſſionate, indeed; "but ſoon appeaſed."

The wench is extremely kind to him already. The other maid is alſo very civil to him. He has a huſband for *her* in his eye. She cannot but ſay, that Mr. Andrew, my *other* ſervant [The girl is for fixing the *perſon*] is a very well ſpoken civil young man.

"We common folks have our joys, and pleaſe "your Honour, ſays honeſt Joſeph Leman, like as "our betters have (*a*)." And true ſays honeſt Joſeph. —Did I prefer eaſe to difficulty, I ſhould envy theſe low born ſinners ſome of their joys.

But if Will. had *not* made amourous pretenſions to the wenches, we all know, that Servants, united in

(*a*) Vol. III, Letter xliii.

one

one *common compare-note cauſe*, are intimate the moment they ſee one another—Great genealogiſts too; they know immediately the whole kin and kin's kin of each other, tho' diſperſed over the three kingdoms, as well as the genealogies and kin's kin of thoſe whom they ſerve.

But my precautions end not here.

O Jack, with ſuch an invention, what occaſion had I to carry my Beloved to Mrs. Sinclair's?

My Spouſe may have *further* occaſion for the meſſengers whom ſhe diſpatched, one to Miſs Howe, the other to Wilſon's. With one of theſe Will. is already well acquainted, as thou haſt heard—To mingle Liquor is to mingle Souls with theſe fellows—With the other meſſenger he will ſoon be acquainted, if he be not already.

The Captain's ſervant has *his* uſes and inſtructions aſſigned him. I have hinted at ſome of them already (*b*). *He* alſo ſerves a moſt humane and conſiderate maſter. I love to make every body reſpected to my power.

The poſt, general and penny, will be ſtrictly watched likewiſe.

Miſs Howe's Collins is remembered to be deſcribed. Miſs Howe's and Hickman's Liveries alſo.

James Harlowe and Singleton are warned againſt. I am to be acquainted with any enquiry that ſhall happen to be made after my Spouſe, whether by her married or maiden name, before *ſhe* ſhall be told of it—And this that I may have it in my power to *prevent miſchief*.

I have ordered Mowbray and Tourville (and Belton, if his health permit) to take their quarters at Hamſtead for a week, with their fellows to attend them. I ſpare thee for the preſent, becauſe of thy private concerns. But hold thyſelf in chearful readineſs however, as a mark of thy *allegiance*.

(*b*) See p. 146, 147.

As

As to my Spouſe herſelf, has ſhe not reaſon to be pleaſed with me for having permitted her to receive Miſs Howe's Letter from Wilſon's? A plain caſe, either that I am no deep plotter, or that I have no further views than to make my peace with her for an offence ſo ſlight and ſo *accidental*.

Miſs Howe ſays, tho' prefaced with an *Alas!* that her charming friend loves me: She muſt therefore yearn after this Reconciliation—Proſpects ſo fair—If ſhe uſed me with leſs rigour, and more politeneſs; if ſhe ſhewed me any *compaſſion*; ſeemed inclinable to ſpare me, and to make the moſt favourable conſtructions; I cannot but ſay, that it would be impoſſible not to ſhew *her* ſome. But to be inſulted and defied by a rebel in one's power, what prince can bear that?

But I return to the ſcene of action. I muſt keep the women ſteady. I had no opportunity to talk to my worthy Mrs. Bevis in private.

Tomlinſon, a dog, not come yet!

LETTER XVII.

Mr. LOVELACE, *To* JOHN BELFORD, *Eſq.*

From my Apartments at Mrs. Moore's.

MISS Rawlins at her Brother's; Mrs. Moore engaged in houſhold matters; Widow Bevis dreſſing; I have nothing to do but write. This curſed Tomlinſon not yet arrived!—Nothing to be done without him.

I think he ſhall complain in pretty high language of the treatment he met with yeſterday. 'What are our 'affairs to him? He can have no view but to ſerve us. 'Cruel to ſend back to town, *un-audienced*, unſeen, a 'man of his buſineſs and importance. He never ſtirs 'a foot, but ſomething of conſequence depends upon 'his movements. A confounded thing to trifle thus 'humourſomely with ſuch a gentleman's moments!— 'Theſe women think, that all the buſineſs of the

'world

'world muſt ſtand ſtill for their *figaries* [A good fe-
'male word, Jack!]: The greateſt triflers in the crea-
'tion, to fancy themſelves the moſt important beings
'in it—*Marry come up!* as I have heard Goody Sor-
'lings ſay to her ſervants, when ſhe has rated at
'them, with mingled anger and diſdain.'

After all, methinks I want thoſe *toſtications* [Thou ſeeſt how women, and women's words, fill my mind] to be over, *happily* over, that I may ſit down quietly, and reflect upon the dangers I have paſſed thro', and the troubles I have undergone. I have a *reflecting* mind, as thou knoweſt; but the very word *reflecting* implies *All got over.*

What bryars and thorns does the wretch ruſh into (a ſcratched face and tattered garments the unavoidable conſequence) who will needs be for ſtriking out a new path thro' overgrown Underwood; quitting *that* beaten out for him by thoſe who have travelled the ſame road before him!

* * * * *

A VISIT from the Widow Bevis, in my own apartment. She tells me, that my Spouſe had thoughts laſt night, after I was gone to my lodgings, of removing from Mrs. Moore's.

I almoſt wiſh ſhe had attempted to do ſo.

Miſs Rawlins, it ſeems, who was applied to upon it, diſſuaded her from it.

Mrs. Moore alſo, tho' ſhe did not own that Will, lay in the houſe (or rather ſet up in it, courting) ſet before her the difficulties, which, in her opinion, ſhe would have to get clear off, without my knowledge; aſſuring her, that ſhe could be no where more ſafe than with her, till ſhe had fixed whither to go. And the Lady herſelf recollected, that if ſhe went, ſhe might miſs the expected Letter from her dear friend Miſs Howe! which, as ſhe owned, was to direct her future ſteps.

She muſt alſo ſurely have ſome curioſity to know

what

what her Uncle's friend had to ſay to her from her Uncle, contemptuouſly as ſhe yeſterday treated a man of his importance. Nor could ſhe, I ſhould think, be abſolutely determined to put herſelf out of the way of receiving the viſits of two of the principal Ladies of my family, and to break entirely with me in the face of them all.—Beſides, whither could ſhe have gone? —Moreover, Miſs Howe's Letter coming (after her elopement) ſo ſafely to her hands, muſt ſurely put her into a more confiding temper with me, and with every one elſe, tho' ſhe would not immediately own it.

But theſe good folks have ſo *little* charity!—Are ſuch *ſevere* cenſurers!—Yet who is *abſolutely perfect?* —It were to be wiſhed, however, that *they would* be ſo modeſt as to doubt themſelves ſometimes: Then would they allow for others, as others (excellent as they imagine themſelves to be) muſt for them.

Saturday, one o'clock.

TOMLINSON at laſt is come. Forced to ride five miles about (tho' I ſhall impute his delay to great and important buſineſs) to avoid the ſight of two or three impertinet raſcals, who, little thinking whoſe affairs he was employed in, wanted to obtrude themſelves upon him. I think I will make this fellow eaſy, if he behave to my liking in this affair.

I ſent up, the moment he came.

She deſired to be excuſed receiving his viſit till four this afternoon.

Intolerable!—No conſideration!—None at all in this ſex, when their curſed humours are in the way! —Pay-day, pay *hour*, rather, will come!—O that it were to be the next!

The captain is in a pet. Who can blame him? Even the women think a man of his conſequence, and generouſly coming to ſerve *us*, hardly uſed. Would to heaven ſhe had attempted to get off laſt night! The women not my enemies, who knows but the Huſband's

exerted authority might have met with ſuch connivance, as might have concluded either in carrying her back to her former lodgings, or in conſummation at Mrs. Moore's, in ſpite of exclamations, fits, and the reſt of the female obſecrations?

My beloved has not appeared to any body this day, except to Mrs Moore. Is, it ſeems, extremely low: Unfit for the intereſting converſation that is to be held in the afternoon. Longs to hear from her dear friend Miſs Howe—Yet cannot expect a Letter for a day or two. Has a bad opinion of all mankind.—No wonder!—Excellent creature as ſhe is! with ſuch a *Father*, ſuch *Uncles*, ſuch a *Brother*, as ſhe has!

How does ſhe look?

Better than could be expected from yeſterday's fatigue, and laſt night's ill reſt.

Theſe tender doves know not, till put to it, what they can bear; eſpecially when engaged in Love-affairs; and their attention wholly engroſſed. But the Sex love buſy ſcenes. Still life is their averſion. A woman will *create* a ſtorm, rather than be without one. So that they can preſide in the whirlwind, and direct it, they are happy.—But my Beloved's misfortune is, that ſhe muſt live in tumults; yet neither raiſe them herſelf, nor be able to controul them.

LETTER XVIII.

Mr. Lovelace, *To* John Belford, *Eſq.*

Sat. Night, June 10.

WHAT will be the iſſue of all my plots and contrivances, devil take me if I am able to divine. But I will not, as Lord M. would ſay, *foreſtall my own market*.

At Four, the appointed hour, I ſent up, to deſire admittance in the Captain's name and my own.

She would wait upon the *Captain* preſently [Not upon *me!*]; and in the parlour, if it were not engaged.

The

The dining-room being *mine*, perhaps that was the reaſon of her naming the parlour—Mighty nice again, if ſo!—No good ſign for me, thought I, this ſtiff punctilio.

In the parlour, with me and the Captain, were Mrs. Moore, Miſs Rawlins, and Mrs. Bevis.

The women ſaid, they would withdraw, when the Lady came down.

Lovel. Not, except ſhe chuſes you ſhould, Ladies—People who are ſo much above-board as I am, need not make ſecrets of any of their affairs. Beſides, you three Ladies are now acquainted with all our concerns.

Capt. I have ſome things to ſay to your Lady, that perhaps ſhe would not herſelf chuſe that any body ſhould hear; not even *you*, Mr. Lovelace, as you and her family are not upon ſuch a good foot of underſtanding as were to be wiſhed.

Lovel. Well, well, Captain, I muſt ſubmit. Give us a ſign to withdraw; and we will withdraw.

It was better that the excluſion of the women ſhould come from him, than from me.

Capt. I will bow, and wave my hand, thus—when I wiſh to be alone with the Lady. Her uncle dotes upon her. I hope, Mr. Lovelace, you will not make a Reconciliation more difficult, for the earneſtneſs which my dear friend ſhews to bring it to bear. But indeed I muſt tell you, *as I told you more than once before*, that I am afraid you have made lighter of the occaſion of this miſunderſtanding to me, than it ought to have been made.

Lovel. I hope, Captain Tomlinſon, you do not queſtion my veracity!

Capt. I beg your pardon, Mr. Lovelace—But thoſe things which we men may think lightly of, may not be light to a woman of delicacy.—And then, if you *have* bound yourſelf by a vow, you ought—

Miſs Rawlins bridling, her lips cloſed (but her mouth ſtretched to a ſmile of approbation, the longer

for not buttoning) tacitly ſhewed herſelf pleaſed with the Captain for his delicacy.

Mrs. Moore *could* ſpeak—*Very true*, however, was all ſhe ſaid, with a motion of her head that expreſſed the bow-approbatory.

For my part, ſaid the jolly widow, ſtaring with eyes as big as eggs, I know what I know—But Man and Wife *are* Man and Wife; or they are *not* Man and Wife.—I have no notion of ſtanding upon ſuch niceties.

But here ſhe comes! cried one, hearing her chamber-door open—Here ſhe comes! another, hearing it ſhut after her—And down dropt the angel among us.

We all ſtood up, bowing and curteſying; and could not help it, For ſhe entered with ſuch an air as commanded all our reverence. Yet the Captain looked plaguy grave.

Cl. Pray keep your ſeats, Ladies—Pray do not go [For they made offers to withdraw; yet Miſs Rawlins would have burſt, had ſhe been ſuffered to retire.] Before this time you have heard all my Story, I make no doubt—Pray keep your ſeats—At leaſt all Mr. Lovelace's.

A very ſaucy and whimſical beginning, thought I.

Capt. Tomlinſon, your ſervant, addreſſing herſelf to him with inimitable dignity. I hope you did not take amiſs my declining your viſit yeſterday. I was really incapable of talking upon any ſubject that required attention.

Capt. I am glad I ſee you better now, Madam. I hope I do.

Cl. Indeed I am not well. I would not have excuſed myſelf from attending you ſome hours ago, but in hopes I ſhould have been better. I beg your pardon, Sir, for the trouble I have given you; and ſhall the rather expect it, as *this day will*, I hope, *conclude it all*.

Thus ſet! thus determined; thought I—Yet to have

have *slept* upon it!—But, as what she said was capable of a good, as well as a bad construction, I would not put an unfavourable one upon it.

Love!. The Captain was sorry, my dear, he did not offer his attendance the moment he arrived yesterday. He was afraid that you took it amiss that he did not.

Cl. Perhaps I thought that my *Uncle*'s friend might have wished to see me as soon as he came [How we stared!]—But, Sir [to me] it might be *convenient to you* to detain him

The devil, thought I!—So there really was resentment, as well as head-ach, as my good friend Mrs. Bevis observed, in her refusing to see the *honest* gentleman.

Capt. You *would* detain me, Mr. Lovelace—I was for paying my respects to the Lady the moment I came—

Cl. Well, Sir [interrupting him] to wave this; for I would not be thought captious—If you have not suffered inconvenience, in being obliged to come again, I shall be easy.

Capt. [half-disconcerted] A *little* inconvenience, I can't say but I have suffered. I have, indeed, too many affairs upon my hands. But the desire I have to serve you and Mr. Lovelace, as well as to oblige my dear friend your Uncle Harlowe, make great inconveniencies but small ones.

Cl. You are very obliging, Sir.—Here is a great alteration since you parted with us last.

Capt. A great one indeed, Madam! I was very much surprised at it, on Thursday evening when Mr. Lovelace conducted you to your lodgings, where we hoped to find you.

Cl. Have you any thing to say to me, Sir, from my Uncle himself, that requires my *private* ear! Don't go, Ladies [for the women stood up, and offered to withdraw]—If Mr. Lovelace stays, I am sure *you* may.

I frowned. I bit my lip. I looked at the women; and ſhook my head.

Capt. I have nothing to offer, but what Mr. Lovelace is a party to, and may hear, except one private word or two, which may be poſtponed to the laſt.

Cl. Pray, Ladies, keep your ſeats.—Things are altered, Sir, ſince I ſaw you. You can mention nothing that relates to *me* now, to which *that gentleman* can be a party.

Capt. You ſurpriſe me, Madam! I am ſorry to hear this!—Sorry for your *Uncle*'s ſake!—Sorry for *your* ſake!—Sorry for Mr. *Lovelace*'s ſake!—And yet I am ſure he muſt have given greater occaſion than he has mentioned to me, or—

Lovel. Indeed, Captain, Indeed, Ladies, I have told you great part of my Story!—And what I told you of my offence was the truth:—What I concealed of my Story was only what I apprehended would, if known, cauſe this dear creature to be thought more cenſorious than charitable.

Cl. Well, well, Sir, ſay what you pleaſe. Make me as black as you pleaſe. Make yourſelf as white as you can. I am not now in your power: That conſideration will comfort me for all.

Capt. God forbid that I ſhould offer to plead in behalf of a crime, that a woman of virtue and honour cannot forgive! But ſurely, ſurely, Madam, this is going too far.

Cl. Do not blame me, Captain Tomlinſon. I have a good opinion of you, as my *Uncle*'s friend. But if you are Mr. *Lovelace*'s friend, that is another thing; for my intereſt and Mr. Lovelace's muſt now be for ever ſeparated.

Capt. One word with you, Madam, if you pleaſe—offering to retire.

Cl. You may ſay all that you pleaſe to ſay before theſe gentlewomen. Mr. Lovelace may have ſecrets. I have none. You ſeem to think me faulty: I ſhould

be

be glad that all the world knew my heart. Let my enemies ſit in judgment upon my actions; fairly ſcanned I fear not the reſult. Let them even aſk me my moſt ſecret thoughts, and, whether they make for me, or againſt me, I will reveal them.

Capt. Noble Lady! who can ſay as you ſay?

The women held up their hands and eyes; each as if ſhe had ſaid, Not I.

No diſorder here! ſaid Miſs Rawlins: But (judging by her own heart) a confounded deal of improbability, I believe ſhe thought.

Finely *ſaid*, to be ſure, ſaid the Widow Bevis, ſhrugging her ſhoulders.

Mrs. Moore ſighed.

Jack Belford, thought I, knows all mine: And in this I am more ingenuous than any of the three, and a fit match for this paragon.

Cl. How Mr. Lovelace has found me out here, I cannot tell. But ſuch mean devices, ſuch artful, ſuch worſe than Waltham diſguiſes put on, to obtrude himſelf into my company; ſuch bold, ſuch ſhocking untruths—

Capt. The favour of but one word, Madam, in private—

Cl. In order to ſupport a right which he has not over me!—O Sir! O Capt. Tomlinſon!—I think I have reaſon to ſay, that the man (There he ſtands!) is capable of any vileneſs!—

The women looked upon one another, and upon me, by turns, to ſee how I bore it. I had ſuch dartings in my head at the inſtant, that I thought I ſhould have gone diſtracted. My brain ſeemed on fire. What would I have given to have had her alone with me!—I traverſed the room; my clenched fiſt to my forehead. O that I had any-body here, thought I, that Hercules-like, when flaming in the tortures of Dejanira's poiſoned ſhirt, I could tear in pieces!

Capt. Dear Lady! ſee you not how the poor gen-

tleman—Lord, how have I impoſed upon your Uncle, at this rate! How happy, did I tell him, I ſaw you! How happy I was ſure you would be in each other?

Cl. O Sir, you don't know how many premeditated offences I *had forgiven* when I ſaw you laſt, before I could appear to you, what I hoped then I might for the future be!—But now you may tell my Uncle, if you pleaſe, that I cannot hope for his mediation. Tell him, that my guilt, in giving this man an opportunity to ſpirit me away from my *tried*, my *experienced*, my *natural* friends (harſhly as they treated me) ſtares me every day more and more in the face; and ſtill the more, as my fate ſeems to be drawing to a criſis, according to the malediction of my offended Father!

And then ſhe burſt into tears, which even affected that dog, who, brought to abet me, was himſelf all *Belforded* over.

The women, ſo uſed to cry without grief, as they are to laugh without reaſon, by mere force of example [Confound their promptitudes!] muſt needs pull out *their* handkerchiefs. The leſs wonder, however, as I myſelf, between confuſion, ſurprize, and concern, could hardly ſtand it.

What's a tender heart good for!—Who can be happy that has a *feeling* heart?—And yet thou'lt ſay, that he who has it not, muſt be a tyger, and no man.

Capt. Let me beg the favour of one word with you, Madam, in private; and that on my *own* account.

The women hereupon offered to retire. She inſiſted, that if *they* went, *I* ſhould not ſtay.

Capt. Sir, bowing to me, ſhall I beg—

I hope, thought I, that I may truſt this ſolemn dog, inſtructed as he is. She does not doubt him. I'll ſtay out no longer than to give her time to ſpend her firſt fire.

I then paſſively withdrew, with the women—But

with

with ſuch a bow to my goddeſs, that it won for me every heart but that I wanted *moſt* to win; for the haughty maid bent not her knee in return.

The converſation between the Captain and the Lady, when we were retired, was to the following effect: They both talked loud enough for me to hear them: The Lady from anger, the Captain with deſign; and thou mayeſt be ſure there was no liſtener but myſelf. What I was imperfect in was ſupplied afterwards; for I had my vellum-leaved book to note all down. If ſhe had known this, perhaps ſhe would have been more ſparing of her invectives—and but *perhaps* neither.

He told her, that as her Brother was abſolutely reſolved to ſee her; and as he himſelf, in compliance with her Uncle's expedient, had reported her marriage; and as that report had reached the ears of Lord M Lady Betty, and the reſt of my relations; and as he had been obliged, in conſequence of his firſt report, to vouch it; and as her Brother might find out where ſhe was, and apply to the women here, for a confirmation or refutation of the Marriage; he had thought himſelf obliged to countenance the report before the women: That this had embarraſſed him not a little, as he would not for the world that ſhe ſhould have cauſe to think him capable of prevarication, contrivance, or double dealing: And that this made him deſirous of a private converſation with her.

It was true, ſhe ſaid, ſhe *had* given her conſent to ſuch an expedient, believing it was her *Uncle*'s; and little thinking, that it would lead to ſo many errors. Yet ſhe might have known, that one error is frequently the parent of many. Mr. Lovelace had made her ſenſible of the truth of that obſervation, on more occaſions than one; and it was an obſervation that he the captain had made, in one of the Letters that was ſhewn her yeſterday (*a*).

(*a*) See p. 100.

He hoped, that ſhe had no miſtruſt of him: That ſhe had no doubt of his honour. If, Madam, you ſuſpect me—If you think me capable—What a man—The Lord be merciful to me!—What a man muſt you think me!

I hope, Sir, there cannot be a man in the world who could deſerve to be ſuſpected in ſuch a caſe as this. I do *not* ſuſpect you. If it were poſſible there could be *one* ſuch man, I am ſure, Capt. Tomlinſon, a Father of Children, a Man in Years, of Senſe and Experience, cannot be that man.

He told me, that juſt then, he thought he felt a ſudden flaſh from her eye, an *Eye-beam* as he called it, dart thro' his ſhivering reins; and he could not help trembling.

The dog's Conſcience, Jack!—Nothing elſe!—I have felt half a dozen ſuch flaſhes, ſuch eye-beams, in as many different converſations with this ſoul-piercing beauty.

Her Uncle, ſhe muſt own, was not accuſtomed to think of ſuch expedients: But ſhe had reconciled this to herſelf, as the caſe was unhappily uncommon; and by the regard he had for her honour.

This ſet the puppy's heart at eaſe, and gave him more courage.

She aſked him, If he thought Lady Betty and Miſs Montague intended her a viſit?

He had no doubt but they did.

And does he imagine, ſaid ſhe, that I could be b ought to countenance to them the report you have given out?

[*I had hoped to bring her to this, Jack, or ſhe had not ſeen their Letters.* But I had told the Captain, that I believed I muſt give up this expectation.]

No. He believed, that I had not ſuch a thought. He was pretty ſure, that I intended, when I ſaw *them*, to tell them (as in confidence) the naked truth.

He then told her, that her Uncle had already made

ſome ſteps towards a general Reconciliation. The moment, Madam, that he knows you are really married, he will enter into conference with your *Father* upon it; having actually expreſſed to your *Mother*, his deſire to be reconciled to you.

And what, Sir, ſaid my Mother? What ſaid my *dear* Mother?

With great emotion ſhe aſked this queſtion; holding out her ſweet face, as the Captain deſcribed her, with the moſt earneſt attention, as if ſhe would ſhorten the way which his words were to have to her heart.

Your Mother, Madam, burſt into tears upon it: And your Uncle was ſo penetrated by *her* tenderneſs, that he could not proceed with the ſubject. But he intends to enter upon it with her in form, as ſoon as he hears that the Ceremony is over.

By the tone of her voice ſhe wept. The dear creature, thought I, begins to relent!—And I grudged the dog his eloquence. I could hardly bear the thought, that any man breathing ſhould have the power which I had loſt, of perſuading this high-ſouled woman, tho' in my own favour. And, wouldſt thou think it? this reflection gave me more uneaſineſs at the moment, than I felt from her reproaches, violent as they were; or than I had pleaſure in her ſuppoſed relenting. For there is Beauty in every thing ſhe ſays and does: Beauty in her paſſion: Beauty in her tears!—Had the Captain been a young fellow, and of rank and fortune, *his* throat would have been in danger; and I ſhould have thought very hardly of *her*.

O Capt. Tomlinſon, ſaid ſhe, you know not what I have ſuffered by this man's ſtrange ways! He had, as I was not aſhamed to tell him yeſterday, a *plain path before him.* He at firſt betrayed me into his power: But when I *was* in it—There ſhe ſtopt. Then reſuming—O Sir, you know not what a ſtrange man he has been!—An unpolite, a rough-manner'd man!—In diſgrace of his Birth, and Education, and Know-

lege, an unpolite man!—And ſo acting, as if his worldly and perſonal advantages ſet him above thoſe graces which diſtinguiſh a gentleman.

The firſt woman that ever ſaid, or that ever thought ſo of me, that's my comfort, thought I!—But this (ſpoken to her *Uncle's friend* behind my back) helps to heap up thy already too-full meaſure, deareſt!—It is down in my vellum-book.

Cl. When I look back on his whole behaviour to a poor young creature (for I am but a *very* young creature) I cannot acquit him either of great folly, or of deep deſign.—And, laſt Wedneſday—There ſhe ſtopt; and I ſuppoſe turned away her face.

I wonder ſhe was not aſhamed to hint at what ſhe thought ſo ſhameful; and that to a *man*, and *alone* with him.

Capt. Far be it from me, Madam, to offer to enter too cloſely into ſo tender a ſubject. Mr. Lovelace owns, that you have reaſon to be diſpleaſed with him. But he ſo ſolemnly clears himſelf to me, of *premeditated* offence.—

Cl. He cannot clear himſelf, Capt. Tomlinſon. The people of the houſe muſt be very vile, as well as he. I am convinced, that there was a wicked confederacy—But no more upon ſuch a ſubject.

Capt. Only one word more, Madam—He tells me, that you promiſed to pardon him. He tells me—

He knew, interrupted ſhe, that he deſerved not pardon, or he had not extorted that promiſe from me. Nor had I given it to him, but to ſhield myſelf from the vileſt outrage—

Capt. I could wiſh, Madam, inexcuſable as his behaviour has been, ſince he has *ſomething* to plead in the reliance he made upon your *promiſe*; that, for the ſake of appearances to the world, and to avoid the miſchiefs that may follow if you abſolutely break with him, you could prevail upon your naturally generous mind to lay an obligation upon him by your forgiveneſs.

She was ſilent.

Capt.

Capt. Your Father and Mother, Madam, deplore a daughter loſt to them, whom your generoſity to Mr. Lovelace may reſtore: Do not put it to the poſſible chance, that they may have cauſe to deplore a double loſs; the loſing of a *Son*, as well as a *Daughter*, who, by his own violence, which you may perhaps prevent, may be for ever loſt to them, and to the whole family.

She pauſed. She wept. She owned, that ſhe felt the force of this argument.

I will be the making of this fellow, thought I.

Capt. Permit me, Madam, to tell you, that I do not think it would be difficult to prevail upon your Uncle, if you inſiſt upon it, to come up privately to town, and to give you with his own hand to Mr. Lovelace—Except indeed your preſent miſunderſtanding were to come to his ears.—Beſides, Madam, your Brother, it is likely, may at this very time be in town; and he is reſolved to find you out—

Cl. Why, Sir, ſhould I be ſo much afraid of my *Brother?* My Brother has injured *me*, not I *him*. Will my Brother offer to me, what Mr. Lovelace has offered!—Wicked, ingrateful man! to inſult a friendleſs, unprotected creature, made friendleſs by himſelf!—I cannot, cannot think of him in the light I once thought of him. What, Sir, to put myſelf into the power of wretch, who has acted by me with ſo much vile premeditation! who ſhall pity, who ſhall excuſe me, if I do, were I to ſuffer ever ſo much from him?—No, Sir.—Let Mr. Lovelace leave me—Let my Brother find me. I am not ſuch a poor creature, as to be afraid to face the Brother who has injured me.

Capt. Were you and your Brother to meet only to confer together, to expoſtulate, to clear up difficulties, it were another thing. But what, Madam, can you think will be the iſſue of an interview (Mr. Solmes with him) when he finds you *unmarried*, and reſolved never to have Mr. Lovelace; ſuppoſing Mr. Lovelace were *not* to interfere; which cannot be imagined?

Cl. Well, Sir, I can only ſay, I am a very unhappy creature!—I muſt reſign to the will of Providence, and be patient under evils, which *that* will not permit me to ſhun. But I have taken my meaſures. Mr. Lovelace can never make *me* happy, nor I *him*. I wait here only for a Letter from Miſs Howe. That muſt determine me—

Determine you as to Mr. Lovelace, Madam? interrupted the Captain.

Cl. I am already determined as to him.

Capt. If it be not in his favour, I have done. I cannot uſe ſtronger arguments than I have uſed, and it would be impertinent to repeat them. If you cannot forgive his offence, I am ſure it muſt have been much greater than he has owned to me. If you are abſolutely determined, be pleaſed to let me know what I ſhall ſay to your Uncle? Your were pleaſed to tell me, *that this day would put an end to what you called my trouble:* I ſhould not have thought it any, could I have been an humble means of reconciling perſons of worth and honour to each other.

Here I entered with a ſolemn air.

Lovel. Captain Tomlinſon, I have heard a part of what has paſſed between you and this unforgiving (however otherwiſe excellent) Lady. I am cut to the heart to find the dear creature ſo determined. I could not have believed it poſſible, with ſuch proſpects, that I had ſo little ſhare in her eſteem. Nevertheleſs I muſt do myſelf juſtice with regard to the offence I was ſo unhappy as to give, ſince I find you are ready to think it much greater than it really was.

Cl. I hear not, Sir, your recapitulations. I am, and ought to be, the ſole judge of inſults offered to my perſon. I enter not into diſcuſſion with you, nor hear you on the ſhocking ſubject. And was going.

I put myſelf between her and the door—You *may* hear all I have to ſay, Madam. My *fault* is not of ſuch a nature, but that you *may*. I will be a juſt accuſer of myſelf; and will not wound your ears.

I then proteſted that the Fire was a real Fire [So it was]. I diſclaimed [leſs truly indeed] premeditation. I owned that I was hurried on by the violence of a youthful paſſion, and by a ſudden impulſe, which few other perſons, in the like ſituation, would have been able to check: That I withdrew, at her command and entreaty, on the promiſe of pardon, without having offered the leaſt indecency, or any freedom, that would not have been forgiven by perſons of delicacy, ſurpriſed in an attitude ſo charming—Her terror, on the alarm of fire, calling for a ſoothing behaviour, and perſonal tenderneſs, ſhe being ready to fall into fits: My hoped-for happy Day ſo near, that I might be preſumed to be looked upon as a betrothed Lover—And that this excuſe might be pleaded *even for the women of the houſe*, that they, thinking us actually married, might ſuppoſe themſelves to be the leſs concerned to interfere on ſo tender an occaſion—There, Jack, was a bold inſinuation on behalf of the women!

High indignation filled her diſdainful eye, Eye-beam after Eye-beam flaſhing at me. Every feature of her ſweet face had ſoul in it. Yet ſhe ſpoke not. Perhaps, Jack, ſhe had a thought, that this *plea for the women* accounted for my contrivance to have her paſs to them as married, when I *firſt carried her thither*.

Capt. Indeed, Sir, I muſt ſay that you did not well to add to the apprehenſions of a Lady ſo much terrified before.

The dear creature offered to go by me. I ſet my back againſt the door, and beſought her to ſtay a few moments. I had not ſaid thus much, my deareſt creature, but for *your* ſake, as well as for *my own*, that Captain Tomlinſon ſhould not think I had been viler than I was. Nor will I ſay one word more on the ſubject, after I have appealed to your own heart, whether it was not neceſſary, that I ſhould *ſay ſo much*; and to the Captain, whether otherwiſe he would not have gone away with a much worſe opinion of me, if he had

judged

judged of my offence by the violence of your reſentment.

Capt. Indeed I *ſhould.* I *own* I ſhould. And I am very glad, Mr. Lovelace, that you are able to defend yourſelf thus far.

Cl. That cauſe muſt be well tried, where the offender takes his ſeat upon the ſame bench with the judge.—I ſubmit not mine to men—Nor, give me leave to ſay to You, Capt. Tomlinſon, tho' I am willing to have a good opinion of you. Had not the man been aſſured that he had influenced you in his favour, he would not have brought you up to Hamſtead.

Capt. That I am *influenced*, as you call it, Madam, is for the ſake of your Uncle, and for your own ſake, more (I will ſay to Mr. Lovelace's face) than for his. What can I have in view, but Peace and Reconciliation? I have, from the *firſt*, blamed, and I now, *again*, blame Mr. Lovelace, for adding diſtreſs to diſtreſs, and terror to terror; the Lady, as you acknowlege, Sir, [*looking valiantly*] ready *before* to fall into fits.

Lovel. Let me o n to you, Captain Tomlinſon, that I have been a very faulty, a very fooliſh man; and, if this dear creature *ever* honoured me with her Love, an *ingrateful* one. But I have had too much reaſon to doubt it. And this is now a flagrant proof that ſhe never had the value for me which my proud heart wiſhed for; that, with ſuch proſpects before us; a Day ſo near; Settlements approved and drawn; her Uncle meditating a general Reconciliation which, for *her* ſake, not *my own*, I was delirous to give into; ſhe can, for an offence ſo *really* ſlight, on an occaſion ſo truly accidental, renounce me for ever; and, with me, all hopes of that Reconciliation in the way her Uncle had put it in, and ſhe had acquieſced with; and riſque all conſequences *fatal ones* as they may too poſſibly be.—By my Soul, Captain Tomlinſon, the dear creature muſt have hated me all the time ſhe was intending to honour me with her hand. And now ſhe

muſt

moſt reſolve to abandon me, as far as I know, with a preference in her heart of the moſt odious of men—in favour of *that Solmes*, who, as you tell me, accompanies her Brother: And with what hopes, with what view, accompanies him!—How can I bear to think of this?—

Cl. It is fit, Sir, that you ſhould judge of my regard for you, by your own conſciouſneſs of demerit. Yet you know, or you would not have dared to behave to me as ſometimes you did, that you had *more of it* than you deſerved.

She walked from us; and then returning, Captain Tomlinſon, ſaid ſhe, I will own to you, that I was not *capable* of reſolving to give my *hand*, and—*nothing but my hand*. Have I not given a flagrant proof of this to the once moſt indulgent of parents? which has brought me into a diſtreſs, which this man has heightened, when he ought, in gratitude and honour, to have endeavoured to render it ſupportable. I had even a *byas*, Sir, in his favour, I ſcruple not to own it. Long (much too long!) bore I with his unaccountable ways, attributing his errors to *unmeaning gaiety*, and to a want of knowing what *true delicacy*, and *true generoſity*, required from a heart ſuſceptible of grateful impreſſions to one involved by his means in unhappy circumſtances. It is now *wickedneſs* in him (a wickedneſs which diſcredits all his *profeſſions*) to ſay, that this laſt cruel and ingrateful inſult was not a *premeditated* one—But what need I ſay more of this inſult, when it was of ſuch a nature, that it has changed that byas in his favour, and make me chuſe to forego all the inviting proſpects he talks of, and to run all hazards, to free myſelf from his power?

O my deareſt creature! how happy for us both, had I been able to *diſcover that byas*, as you condeſcend to call it, thro' ſuch reſerves as man never encountered with!

He *did* diſcover it, Capt. Tomlinſon. He brought

me,

me, *more than once, to own it*; the more needleſly brought me to own it, as I dare ſay his own *Vanity* gave him *no cauſe to doubt it*; and as I had apparently no other motive in not being *forward* to own it, than my too juſtly-founded apprehenſions of his *want of generoſity*. In a word, Captain Tomlinſon (and now, that I am determined upon my meaſures, I the leſs ſcruple to ſay) I ſhould have deſpiſed myſelf, had I found myſelf capable of Affectation or Tyranny to the man I intended to marry. I have always blamed the deareſt friend I have in the world for a fault of this nature. In a word—

Lovel. And had my angel really and indeed the favour for me ſhe is pleaſed to own?—Deareſt creature, forgive me. Reſtore me to your good opinion. Surely I have not ſinned beyond forgiveneſs. You ſay, that I extorted from you the promiſe you made me. But I could not have preſumed to make that promiſe the condition of my obedience, had I not thought there *was room to expect* forgiveneſs. Permit, I beſeech you, the proſpects to take place, that were opening ſo agreeably before us. I will go to town, and bring the Licence. All difficulties to the obtaining of it are ſurmounted. Captain Tomlinſon ſhall be witneſs to the Deeds. He will be preſent at the Ceremony on the part of your Uncle. Indeed he gave me hope, that your Uncle himſelf—

Capt. I *did*, Mr. Lovelace: And I will tell you my grounds for the hope I gave. I promiſed to my dear friend (Your Uncle, Madam) that he ſhould give out, that he would take a turn with me to my little Farm-houſe, as I call it, near Northampton, for a week or ſo.—Poor gentleman! he has of late been very little abroad! Too viſibly indeed declining!—Change of Air, it might be given out, was good for him.—But I ſee, Madam, that this is too *tender* a ſubject—

The dear creature wept. She knew how to apply as meant the Captain's hint to the *occaſion* of her Uncle's declining ſtate of health.

Capt.

Capt. We might indeed, I told him, ſet out in that road, but turn ſhort to town in *my* chariot; and he might ſee the ceremony performed with his own eyes, and be the deſired Father, as well as the beloved Uncle.

She turned from us, and wiped her eyes.

Capt. And, really, there ſeem now to be but two objections to this, as Mr. Harlowe diſcouraged not the propoſal—The one, the unhappy miſunderſtanding between you; which I would not by any means he ſhould know; ſince then he might be apt to give weight to Mr. James Harlowe's unjuſt ſurmizes.—The other, that it would neceſſarily occaſion ſome delay to the ceremony; which certainly may be performed in a day or two—If—

And then he reverently bowed to my goddeſs.—Charming fellow!—But often did I curſe my ſtars, for making me ſo much obliged to his adroitneſs.

She was going to ſpeak; but, not liking the turn of her countenance (altho', as I thought, its ſeverity and indignation ſeemed a little abated) I ſaid, and had like to have blown myſelf up by it—One Expedient I have juſt thought of—

Cl. None of your *Expedients*, Mr. Lovelace!—I abhor your *Expedients*, your *Inventions*—I have had too many of them.

Love. See, Capt. Tomlinſon!—See, Sir!—O how we expoſe ourſelves to you!—Little did you think, I dare ſay, that we have lived in ſuch a continued miſunderſtanding together!—But you will make the beſt of it all. We may yet be happy. O that I could have been aſſured, that this dear creature loved *me* with the hundredth part of the Love I have for *her*!—Our diffidences have been mutual. I preſume to ſay, that ſhe has too much punctilio: I am afraid, that I have too little. Hence our difficulties. But I have a Heart, Capt. Tomlinſon, a Heart, that bids me hope for her Love, becauſe it is reſolved to deſerve it as much as man *can* deſerve it.

Capt.

Capt. I am indeed surprised at what I have seen and heard. I defend not Mr. Lovelace, Madam, in the offence he has given you—As a Father of Daughters myself, I *cannot* defend him; tho' his fault seems to be lighter than I had apprehended—But in my conscience, Madam, I think you carry your resentment too high.

Cl. Too high, Sir!—Too high, to the man that might have been happy if he would! Too high to the man that has held *my soul in suspense* an hundred times, since (by artifice and deceit) he obtained a power over me!—Say, Lovelace, thyself say, Art thou not the *very* Lovelace, who by insulting *me*, hast wronged thine *own hopes?*—The wretch that appeared in vile disguises, personating an old lame creature, seeking for lodgings for thy sick wife?—Telling the gentlewomen here, Stories all of thine own invention; aad asserting to them an husband's right over me, which thou hast not?—And is it [turning to the Captain] to be expected, that I should give credit to the protestations of *such a man?*

Lovel. Treat me, dearest creature, as you please, I will bear it: And yet your scorn and your violence have fixed daggers in my heart—But was it possible, without those disguises, to come at your speech?—And could I lose you, if study, if invention, would put it in my power to arrest your anger, and give me hope to engage you to confirm to me the *promised pardon?* The address I made to you before the women, as if the marriage-ceremony had passed, was in consequence of what your Uncle *had advised*, and what *you had acquiesced with*; and the rather made, as your Brother, and Singleton, and Solmes, were resolved to find out whether what was reported of your marriage were true or not, that they might take their measures accordingly; and in hopes to prevent that mischief, which I have been but *too* studious to prevent, since this tameness has but invited insolence from your Brother and his confederates.

Cl. O thou ſtrange wretch, how thou talkeſt!—But, Captain Tomlinſon, give me leave to ſay, that, were I inclined to enter farther upon this ſubject, I would appeal to Miſs Rawlins's judgment (Whom elſe have I to appeal to?) She ſeems to be a perſon of prudence and honour; but not to any *Man*'s judgment, whether I carry my reſentment beyond fit bounds, when I reſolve—

Capt. Forgive, Madam, the interruption—But I think there can be no reaſon for this. You ought, as you ſaid, to be the *ſole judge* of indignities offered you. The gentlewomen here are ſtrangers to you. You will perhaps ſtay but a little while among them. If you lay the ſtate of your caſe before any of them, and your Brother come to enquire of them, your Uncle's intended mediation will be diſcovered, and rendered abortive—*I* ſhall appear in a light that I never appeared in, in my life—for theſe women may not think themſelves obliged to keep the ſecret.

Charming fellow!

Cl. O what difficulties has one fatal ſtep involved me in—But there is no neceſſity for ſuch an appeal to any-body. I am reſolved on my meaſures.

Capt. Abſolutely reſolved, Madam?

Cl. I am.

Capt. What ſhall I ſay to your Uncle Harlowe, Madam?—Poor gentleman! how will he be ſurpriſed!—You ſee, Mr. Lovelace—You ſee, Sir,—turning to me, with a flouriſhing hand—But you may *thank yourſelf*—And admirably ſtalked he from us.

True, by my Soul, thought I. I traverſed the room, and bit my unperſuaſive lips, now upper, now under, for vexation.

He made a profound reverence to her—And went to the window, where lay his Hat and Whip; and, taking them up, opened the door. Child, ſaid he, to ſomebody he ſaw, pray order my ſervant to bring my my horſe to the door—

Lovel.

Lovel. You won't go, Sir—I hope you won't!—I am the unhappieſt man in the world!—You won't go—Yet alas!—But you won't go, Sir!—There may be yet hopes that Lady Betty may have ſome weight—

Capt. Dear Mr. Lovelace! and may not my worthy friend, and affectionate Uncle, hope for *ſome* influence upon his *Daughter-niece?*—But I beg pardon—A letter will always find me diſpoſed to ſerve the Lady, and that as well for her ſake, as for the ſake of my dear friend.

She had thrown herſelf into her chair; her eyes caſt down: She was motionleſs, as in a profound ſtudy.

The Captain bowed to her again: But met with no return to his bow. *Mr. Lovelace*, ſaid he (with an air of equality and independence) *I am Yours.*

Still the dear unaccountable ſat as immoveable as a ſtatue; ſtirring neither hand, foot, head, not eye—I never before ſaw any one in ſo profound a reverie, in ſo waking a dream.

He paſſed by her to go out at the door ſhe ſat near, tho' the paſſage by the other door was his direct way; and bowed again. She moved not. I will not diſturb the Lady in her meditations, Sir.—Adieu, Mr. Lovelace—*No farther, I beſeech you.*

She ſtarted, ſighing—Are you going, Sir?

Capt. I am, Madam. I could have been glad to do you ſervice; but I ſee it is not in my power.

She ſtood up, holding out one hand, with inimitable dignity and ſweetneſs—I am ſorry you are going, Sir!—can't help it—I have no friend to adviſe with—Mr. Lovelace has the art (or good fortune, perhaps I ſhould call it) to make himſelf many.—Well, Sir—if you will go, I can't help it.

Capt. I will *not* go, Madam; his eyes twinkling. [Again ſeizing with a fit of humanity!] I will not go, if my longer ſtay can do you either ſervice or pleaſure. What, Sir [turning to me] what, Mr. Lovelace, was

your

your Expedient?—Perhaps ſomething may be offered, Madam—

She ſighed and was ſilent.

REVENGE, *invoked I to myſelf, keep thy throne in my heart.—If the uſurper* LOVE *once more drive thee from it, thou wilt never regain poſſeſſion!*

Lovel. What I had thought of, what I had intended to propoſe [and I ſighed] was this, That the dear creature, if ſhe will not forgive me, as ſhe promiſed, will ſuſpend the diſpleaſue ſhe has conceived againſt me, till Lady Betty arrives.—That Lady may be the mediatrix between us. This dear creature may put herſelf into *her* protection, and accompany her down to her ſeat in Oxfordſhire. It is one of her Ladyſhip's purpoſes to prevail on her ſuppoſed new Niece to go down with her. It may paſs to every one but to Lady Betty, and to you, Captain Tomlinſon, and to your friend Mr. Harlowe (as he deſires) that we have been ſome time married: And her being with my relations, will amount to a proof to James Harlowe, that we *are*; and our Nuptials may be privately, and at this beloved creature's pleaſure, ſolemnized; and your report, Captain, authenticated.

Capt. Upon my honour, Madam, clapping his hand upon his breaſt, a charming Expedient!—This will anſwer every end.

She muſed—She was greatly perplexed—At laſt, God direct me! ſaid ſhe: I know not what to do—A young unfriended creature? Whom have I to adviſe with!—Let me retire, if I *can* retire.

She withdrew with ſlow and trembling feet, and went up to her chamber.

For heaven's ſake, ſaid the penetrated varlet [his hands lifted up]; for heaven's ſake, take compaſſion upon this admirable woman!—I cannot proceed—I cannot proceed—She deſerves all things—

Softly!—damn the fellow!—The women are coming in. He

He ſobbed up his grief—turned about—hemm'd up a more *manly* accent—Wipe thy curſed eyes—He did. The Sunſhine took place on one cheek, and ſpread ſlowly to the other, and the fellow had his whole face again.

The women all three came in, led by that ever-curious Miſs Rawlins. I told them, that the Lady was gone up to conſider of every-thing: That we had hopes of her. And ſuch a repreſentation we made of all that had paſſed, as brought either tacit or declared blame upon the fair Perverſe for hardneſs of heart and over-delicacy.

The Widow Bevis, in particular, put out one lip, toſſed up her head, wrinkled her forehead, and made ſuch motions with her now lifted-up, now caſt-down eyes, as ſhewed, that ſhe thought there was a great deal of perveſeneſs and affectation in the Lady. Now-and-then ſhe changed her cenſuring looks to looks of pity of me—But (as ſhe ſaid) She loved not to aggravate!—A poor buſineſs, *God help*'s! ſhrugging up her ſhoulders, to make ſuch a rout about! And then her eyes laughed heartily—Indulgence was a good thing! Love was a good thing!—But too much was too much!

Miſs Rawlins, however, declared, after ſhe had called the Widow Bevis, with a prudiſh ſimper, a *comical gentlewoman!* that there muſt be ſomething in our Story, which ſhe could not fathom; and went from us into a corner, and ſat down, ſeemingly vexed that ſhe could not.

LETTER XIX.

Mr. LOVELACE. *In Continuation.*

THE Lady ſtaid longer above than we wiſhed; and I hoping that (Lady-like) ſhe only waited for an *Invitation* to return to us, deſired the Widow Bevis;

Bevis, in the Captain's name (who wanted to go to town) to requeſt the favour of her company.

I cared not to ſend up either Miſs Rawlins or Mrs. Moore on the errand, leſt my Beloved ſhould be in a *communicative diſpoſition*; eſpecially as ſhe had hinted at an appeal to Miſs Rawlins; who, beſides, has ſuch an unbounded curioſity.

Mrs. Bevis preſently returned with an anſwer (winking and pinking at me) that the Lady would follow her down. Miſs Rawlins could not but offer to retire, as the others did. Her eyes, however, intimated that ſhe had rather ſtay. But they not being anſwered as ſhe ſeemed to wiſh, ſhe went with the reſt, but with ſlower feet; and had hardly left the parlour, when the Lady entered it by the other door; a melancholy dignity in her perſon and air.

She ſat down. Pray, Mr. Tomlinſon, be ſeated.

He took his chair over againſt her. I ſtood behind her's that I might give him *agreed-upon* ſignals, ſhould there be occaſion for them.

As thus—A wink of the left-eye was to ſignify *puſh that point, Captain.*

A wink of the right, and a nod, was to indicate *Approbation* of what he had ſaid.

My fore-finger held up, and biting my lip, *Get off of that, faſt as poſſible.*

A right-forward nod, and a frown—*Swear to it, Captain.*

My whole ſpread hand, *To take care not to ſay too much on that particular ſubject.*

A ſcouling brow, and a poſitive nod, was to bid him *riſe in temper.*

And theſe motions I could make, even thoſe with my hand, without holding up my arm, or moving my wriſt, had the women been there; as, when the motions were agreed upon, I knew not but they would.

She hemmed—I was going to ſpeak, to ſpare her ſuppoſed confuſion: But this Lady never wants pre-

ſence of mind, when preſence of mind is neceſſary either to her honour, or to that conſcious dignity which diſtinguiſhes her from all the women I ever knew.

I have been conſidering, ſaid ſhe, as well as I was able, of every thing that has paſſed; and of all that has been ſaid; and of my unhappy ſituation. I mean no ill; I wiſh no ill, to any creature living, Mr. Tomlinſon. I have always delighted to draw favourable rather than unfavourable concluſions; ſometimes, as it has proved, for very bad hearts. Cenſorioufneſs, whatever faults I have, is not *naturally* my fault.—But, circumſtanced as I am; treated as I have been, unworthily treated, by a man who is full of contriveances, and glories in them—

Lovel. My deareſt Life?—But I will not interrupt you.

Cl. Thus treated, it becomes me to doubt—It concerns my honour to doubt, to fear, to apprehend—*Your* intervention, Sir, is ſo ſeaſonable, ſo kind, for *this man*—My Uncle's Expedient, the firſt of the kind he ever, I believe, thought of! a plain honeſt, good-minded man, as he is, not affecting ſuch Expedients—Your report in conformity to it—The conſequences of that report; The alarm taken by my Brother; His raſh reſolution upon it—The alarm taken by Lady Betty, and the reſt of Mr. Lovelace's relation—The *ſudden* Letters written to him upon it, which, with yours, he ſhewed me—All ceremony, among perſons *born obſervers of ceremony*, and entitled to value themſelves upon *their diſtinction*, diſpenſed with—All theſe things have happened *ſo quick*, and ſome of them *ſo* ſeaſonable—

Lovel. Lady Betty, you ſee, Madam, in her Letter, diſpenſes with punctilio, avowedly in compliment to you. Charlotte, in hers, profeſſes to do the ſame for the ſame reaſon. Good Heaven! that the reſpect intended you by my relations, who, in every other caſe, are really punctilious, ſhould be thus conſtrued!

They

They were glad, Madam, to have an opportunity to compliment you at my expence. Every one of my family takes delight in raillying me. But their joy on the ſuppoſed occaſion—

Cl. Do I doubt, Sir, that you have not ſomething to ſay, for any-thing you think fit to do? I am ſpeaking to Captain Tomlinſon, Sir. I will you would be pleaſed to withdraw—At leaſt to come from behind my chair.

And ſhe looked at the Captain, obſerving, no doubt, that his eyes ſeemed to take leſſons from mine.

A fair match, by Jupiter!

The Captain was diſconcerted. The dog had not had ſuch a bluſh upon his face for ten years before. I bit my lip for vexation: Walked about the room; but nevertheleſs took my poſt again; and blinked with my eyes to the Captain, as a caution for him to take more care of *his*: And then ſcouling with my brows, and giving the nod poſitive, I as good as ſaid, *Reſent that, Captain.*

Capt. I hope, Madam, you have no ſuſpicion, that I am capable—

Cl. Be not diſpleaſed with me, Capt. Tomlinſon. I have told you, that I am not of a ſuſpicious temper. Excuſe me for the ſake of my ſincerity. There is not, I will be bold to ſay, a ſincerer heart in the world, than her's before you.

She took out her handkerchief, and put it to her eyes.

I was going, at that inſtant, after her example, to vouch for the honeſty of *my* heart; but my conſcience *Mennelled* upon me; and would not ſuffer the meditated vow to paſs my lips.—A deviliſh thing, thought I, for a man to be ſo little himſelf, when he has moſt occaſion for himſelf!

The villain Tomlinſon looked at me with a rueful face, as if he begged leave to cry for company. It might have been as well, if he *had* cried. A feeling heart, or the tokens of it given by a ſenſible eye,

are very reputable things, when kept in countenance by the occaſion.

And here let me fairly own to thee, that twenty times in this trying converſation I ſaid to myſelf, that could I have thought, that I ſhould have had all this trouble, and incurred all this guilt, I would have been honeſt at firſt. But why, Jack, is this dear creature ſo lovely, yet ſo invincible?—Ever heardſt thou before, that the ſweets of May bloſſomed in December?

Capt. Be pleaſed—be pleaſed, Madam—if you have doubts of my honour—

A whining varlet! He ſhould have been quite angry—For what gave I him the nod poſitive? He ſhould have ſtalked again to the window, as for his Whip and Hat.

Cl. I am only making ſuch obſervations as my youth, my inexperience, and my preſent unhappy circumſtances, ſuggeſt to me—A worthy heart (ſuch, I hope, is Captain Tomlinſon's) need not fear an examination—need not fear being looked into—Whatever doubts *that* man, who has been the *Cauſe of my Errors*, and, as my ſevere Father imprecated, *the Puniſher of the Errors he has cauſed*, might have had of me, or of my honour, I would have forgiven him for them, if he had fairly propoſed them to me: For ſome doubts perhaps *ſuch a man* might have of the future conduct of a creature whom he could induce to correſpond with him againſt *parental prohibition*, and againſt the *lights which her own judgment threw in upon her*: And if he had propounded them to me like a man and a gentleman, I would have been glad of the opportunity given me to clear my intentions, and to have ſhewn myſelf entitled to his good opinion—And I hope *you*, Sir—

Capt. I am ready to hear all your doubts, Madam, and to clear them up—

Cl. I will only put it, Sir, to your Conſcience and Honour—

The

The dog ſat uneaſy: He ſhuffled with his feet: Her eye was upon him: He was therefore, after the rebuff he had met with, afraid to look at me for my motions; and now turned his eyes towards me, then from me, as if he would *unlock* his own looks.

Cl. —That all is true, that you have written, and that you have told me.

I gave him a right-forward nod, and a frown—as much as to ſay, *Swear to it, Captain.* But the varlet did not round it off as I would have had him. However, he averred that it was.

He had hoped, he ſaid, that the circumſtances with which his commiſſion was attended, and what he had communicated to her, *which he could not know but from his dear friend her Uncle,* might have ſhielded him even from the *ſhadow* of ſuſpicion—But I am contented, ſaid he, ſtammering, to be thought—to be thought—what—what you pleaſe to think me—till, till, you are ſatisfied—

A Whore's-bird!

Cl. The circumſtances you refer to, I muſt own, *ought* to ſhield you, Sir, from ſuſpicion—But the man before you is a man that would make an angel ſuſpected, ſhould that angel plead for him.—

I came forward. Traverſed the room—Was indeed in a bloody paſſion—I have no patience, Madam!—And again I bit my unperſuaſive lips—

Cl. No man ought to be impatient at imputations he is not aſhamed to deſerve. An innocent man *will not* be outrageous upon ſuch imputations. A guilty man *ought not.* [Moſt excellently would this charming creature cap ſentences with Lord M.!] But I am not now trying you, Sir, [to me] on the foot of your *merits.* I am only ſorry, that I am conſtrained to put queſtions to this *worthier* gentleman [*Worthier* gentleman, Jack!] which perhaps I ought not to put, ſo far as they regard *himſelf.*—And I hope, Captain Tomlinſon, that you, who know not Mr.

Lovelace ſo well, as, to my unhappineſs, I do, and who have Children of your own, will excuſe a poor young creature, who is deprived of all worldly protection, and who has been inſulted and endangered by the moſt *deſigning man in the world*, and perhaps *by a confederacy of his creatures.*

There ſhe ſtopt; and ſtood up, and looked at me; Fear, nevertheleſs, apparently mingled with her Anger. And ſo it ought. I was glad, however, of this poor ſign of Love—No one fears whom they value not.

Women's tongues were licenſed, I was going to ſay —But my conſcience would not *let* me call her a *woman*; nor uſe to her ſo vulgar a phraſe. I could only rave by my motions; lift up my eyes, ſpread my hands, rub my face, pull my wig, and look like a fool. Indeed, I had a great mind to run mad. Had I been alone with her, I would; and ſhe ſhould have taken conſequences.

The Captain interpoſed in my behalf; gently, however, and as a man not quite ſure that he was himſelf acquitted. Some of the pleas we had both inſiſted on, he again enforced—And, ſpeaking low—Poor gentleman! ſaid he, who can but pity him!—Indeed, Madam, it is eaſy to ſee, with all his failings, the power you have over him!—

Cl. I have no pleaſure, Sir, in diſtreſſing any one —Not even *him*, who has ſo much diſtreſſed *me*.—But, Sir, when I THINK, and when I ſee him before me, I cannot command my temper!—Indeed, indeed, Captain Tomlinſon, Mr. Lovelace *has not acted by me* either as a grateful, or a generous man; nor even as a *prudent* one!—He knows not, as I told him yeſterday, the value of the heart he has inſulted!

There the angel ſtopt; her handkerchief at her eyes.

O Belford, Belford! that ſhe ſhould ſo greatly excel, as to make me, at times, appear as a villain in my own eyes! I be-

I beſought her pardon. I promiſed, that it ſhould be the ſtudy of my whole life to deſerve it. My faults, I ſaid, *whatever* they had been, were rather faults in her *apprehenſion*, than in *fact*. I beſought her to give way to the Expedient I had hit upon—I repeated it. The Captain enforced it, for her Uncle's ſake. I once more, for the ſake of the general Reconciliation; for the ſake of all my family; for the ſake of preventing further miſchief.—

She wept. She ſeemed ſtaggered in her reſolution—She turned from me. I mentioned the Letter of Lord M. I beſought her to reſign to Lady Betty's mediation all our differences, if ſhe would not forgive me *before* ſhe ſaw her.

She turned towards me—She was going to ſpeak; but her heart was full—And again ſhe turned away her face—Then, half-turning it to me, her handkerchief at her eyes—And do you *really* and *indeed* expect Lady Betty and Miſs Montague?—And do you—Again ſhe ſtopt—

I anſwered in a ſolemn manner.

She turned from me her whole face, and paufed, and ſeemed to conſider. But, in a paſſionate accent, again turning towards me [O how difficult, Jack, for a Harlowe ſpirit to forgive!]—Let her Ladyſhip come, if ſhe pleaſes, ſaid ſhe—I cannot, cannot wiſh to *ſee* her—And if I did ſee her, and ſhe were to plead for you, I cannot wiſh to *hear* her!—The more I *think*, the leſs I can forgive an attempt, that I am convinced was intended to *deſtroy* me. [A plaguy ſtrong word for the occaſion, ſuppoſing ſhe was right!] What has my conduct been, that an inſult of *ſuch* a nature ſhould be offered to me, and it would be a *weakneſs* in me to forgive? I am ſunk in my own eyes!—And how can I receive a viſit that muſt depreſs me more?

The Captain urged her in my favour with greater earneſtneſs than before. We both even clamoured as

I may ſay, for mercy and forgiveneſs. [Didſt thou never hear the good folks talk of taking Heaven by ſtorm?]—contrition repeatedly avowed—A total Reformation promiſed—The happy Expedient again urged—

Cl. I have taken my meaſures. I have gone too far to recede, or to *wiſh* to recede. My mind is prepared for Adverſity. That I have not *deſerved* the evils I have met with, is my conſolation?—I have written to Miſs Howe what my intentions are. My heart is not *with you*—It is *againſt* you, Mr. Lovelace. I had not written to you as I did in the Letter I left behind me, had I not reſolved, whatever became of me, to renounce you for ever.

I was full of hope now. Severe as her expreſſions were, I ſaw ſhe was afraid that I ſhould think of what ſhe had written. And indeed, her Letter is violence itſelf. *Angry people, Jack, ſhould never write while their paſſion holds.*

Lovel. The ſeverity you have ſhewn me, Madam, whether by pen or by ſpeech, ſhall never have place in my remembrance, but for your *honour*. In the light you have taken things, all is deſerved, and but the natural reſult of virtuous reſentment; and I adore you, even for the pangs you have given me.

She was ſilent. She had employment enough with her handkerchief at her eyes.

Lovel. You lament ſometimes, that you have no friends of your own Sex to conſult with. Miſs Rawlins, I muſt confeſs, is too inquiſitive to be confided in [I liked not, thou mayeſt think, her appeal to Miſs Rawlins]. She *may mean* well. But I never in my life knew a perſon who was fond of prying into the ſecrets of others, that was fit to be truſted. The curioſity of ſuch is governed by pride, which is not gratified but by whiſpering about a ſecret till it becomes public, in order to ſhew either their conſequence, or their ſagacity. It is ſo in every caſe. What

man

man or woman, who is *covetous* of *power*, or of *wealth*, is covetous of either, for the ſake of making a right uſe of it?—But in the Ladies of my family you *may* confide. It is their ambition to think of you, as one of themſelves. Renew but your conſent to paſs *to the world*, for the ſake of your Uncle's Expedient, and for the prevention of miſchief, as a Lady ſome time married. Lady Betty may be acquainted with the naked truth; and you may *(as ſhe hopes you will)* accompany her to her Seat; and, if it *muſt* be ſo, conſider me as in a State of Penitence or Probation, to be accepted or rejected, as I may appear to deſerve.

The Captain again clapt his hands on his breaſt, and declared upon his honour, that this was a propoſal, that were the caſe that of his own Daughter, and ſhe were not reſolved upon *immediate* Marriage (which yet he thought by far the more eligible choice) he ſhould be very much concerned, were ſhe to refuſe it.

Cl. Were I with Mr. Lovelace's relations, and to paſs as his wife to the world, I could not have any choice. And how could he be then in a State of Probation?—O, Mr. Tomlinſon, you are too much his *friend* to ſee into his drift.

Capt. His friend, Madam, as I ſaid before, as I am *Yours* and your *Uncle's*, for the ſake of a general Reconciliation, which muſt begin with a better underſtanding between yourſelves.

Lovel. Only, my deareſt Life, reſolve to attend the arrival and viſit of Lady Betty: And permit her to arbitrate between us.

Capt. There can be no harm in *that*, Madam. You can ſuffer no inconvenience from *that*. If Mr. Lovelace's offence be ſuch, that a woman of Lady Betty's character judges it to be unpardonable, why then—

Cl. [interrupting; and to me] If I am not invaded by you, Sir—If I am (as I ought to be) my own miſtreſs, I think to ſtay here, in this *honeſt houſe*

[And then had I an *Eye beam*, as the Captain calls it, flashed at me] till I receive a Letter from Miss Howe. That, I hope, will be in a day or two. If in that time the Ladies come whom you expect, and if they are desirous to see the creature whom you have made unhappy, I shall know whether I can or cannot receive their visit.

She turned short to the door, and retiring went upstairs to her chamber.

O Sir, said the Captain, as soon as she was gone, what an angel of a women is this! I *have been*, and I *am*, a very wicked man. But if any thing should happen amiss to this admirable Lady, thro' *my* means, I shall have more cause for self-reproach than for all the bad actions of my life put together.

And his eyes glistened.

Nothing can happen amiss, thou sorrowful dog!—What *can* happen amiss?—Are we to form our opinion of things by the romantick notions of a girl, who supposes *that* to be the greatest which is the slightest of evils? have I not told thee our whole Story? Has she not broken her promise? Did I not generously spare her, when in my power? I was decent, tho' I had her at such advantage. Greater liberties have I taken with girls of character at a common Romping-bout, and all has been laughed off, and Handkerchief and Headcloths adjusted, and Petticoats shaken to rights, in my presence. Never man, in the like circumstances, and resolved as I was resolved, goaded on as I was goaded on, as well by her own Sex, as by the impulses of a violent passion, was ever so decent. Yet what mercy does she shew me?

Now, Jack, this pitiful dog was such another unfortunate one as thyself—His arguments serving to confirm me in the very purpose he brought them to prevail upon me to give up. Had he left me to myself, to the tenderness of my own nature, moved as I was when the Lady withdrew; and had he set down,

and

and made odious faces, and ſaid nothing; it is very poſſible, that I ſhould have taken the chair over-againſt him which ſhe had quitted; and have cried and blubbered with him for half an hour together. But the varlet to *argue* with me!—To pretend to *convince* a man, who knows in his heart that he is doing a wrong thing?—He muſt needs think, that this would put me upon trying what I could ſay for myſelf; and when the excited compunction can be carried from the *heart* to the *lips* it muſt evaporate in words.

Thou perhaps, in this place, wouldſt have urged the ſame pleas that he urged. What I anſwered to him therefore may do for thee, and ſpare *thee* the trouble of writing, and *me* of reading, a good deal of nonſenſe.

Capt. You were pleaſed to tell me, Sir, that you only propoſed *to try her virtue*; and that you believed you ſhould actually marry her.

Lovel. So I ſhall, and cannot help it. I have no doubt but I ſhall. And as to *trying* her, is ſhe not now in the height of her trial? Have I not reaſon to think that ſhe is coming about? Is ſhe not now yielding up her reſentment for an attempt which ſhe thinks ſhe ought *not* to forgive?—And if ſhe do, may ſhe not forgive the *laſt attempt*?—Can ſhe, in a word, reſent *that* more than ſhe does *this*?—Women often, for their own ſakes, will keep the *laſt ſecret*; but will oſtentatiouſly din the ears of gods and men with their clamours upon a ſucceſsleſs offer. It was my folly, my weakneſs, that I gave her not more cauſe for this her unſparing violence!

Capt. O Sir, you will never be able to ſubdue this Lady without Force.

Lovel. Well, then, puppy, muſt I not endeavour to find a proper time and place—

Capt. Forgive me, Sir! But can you think of Force to ſuch a fine creature?

Lovel. Force, indeed, I abhor the thought of; and

for what, thinkeſt thou, have I taken all the pains I have taken, and engaged ſo many perſons in my cauſe, but to avoid the neceſſity of *violent* compulſion? But yet, imagineſt thou that I expect *direct conſent* from ſuch a Lover of Forms as this Lady is known to be! Let me tell thee, M'Donald, that thy maſter Belford has urged on thy ſide of the queſtion all that thou canſt urge. Muſt I have every ſorry fellow's conſcience to pacify, as well as my own?—By my Soul, Patrick, ſhe has a friend *here* [clapping my hand on my breaſt] that pleads for her with greater and more irreſiſtible eloquence, than all the men in the world can plead for her. And had ſhe *not eſcaped me?*—And yet how have I anſwered my firſt deſign of trying her (*a*), and in *her* the Virtue of the moſt virtuous of the Sex?—Perſeverance, man?—Perſeverance—What! wouldſt thou have me decline a trial that may make for the honour of a Sex we all ſo dearly love?

Then, Sir, you have no thoughts—no thoughts—[looking ſtill more ſorrowfully] of marrying this wonderful Lady?

Yes, yes, Patrick, but I have. But let me, firſt, to gratify *my* pride, bring down *hers*. Let me ſee, that ſhe loves me well enough to forgive me for my *own* ſake. Has ſhe not heretofore lamented, that ſhe ſtaid not in her Father's houſe, tho' the conſequence muſt have been, if ſhe *had*, that ſhe would have been the wife of the odious Solmes? If now ſhe be brought to conſent to be mine, ſeeſt thou not, that the *Reconciliation* with her *deteſted relations* is the *inducement*, as it *always* was, and not *Love* of *me?*—Neither her Virtue nor her Love can be eſtabliſhed but upon full trial; the *laſt* trial—But if her reſiſtance and reſentment be ſuch as hitherto I have reaſon to expect they will be, and if I find in that reſentment leſs of hatred of *Me*, than of the *Fact*, then ſhall ſhe be mine in

(*a*) See Vol. III. p. 79, & ſeq.

her

her own way. Then, hateful as is the *Life of Shackles* to me, will I *marry her*.

Well, Sir, I can only ſay, that I am dough in your hands, to be moulded into what ſhape you pleaſe. But if, as I ſaid before—

None of thy *Saids-before*, Patrick. I remember all thou ſaidſt—And I know all thou canſt *further* ſay—Thou art only, Pontius Pilate like, waſhing thine own hands (don't I know thee?) that thou mayſt have ſomething to ſilence thy conſcience with by loading me. But we have gone too far to recede. Are not all our engines in readineſs?—Dry up thy ſorrowful eyes. Let unconcern and heart's eaſe once more take poſſeſſion of thy ſolemn features. Thou haſt hitherto performed extremely well. Shame not thy *paſt* by thy *future* behaviour; and a rich reward awaits thee. If thou *art* dough *be* dough; and I ſlapt him on the ſhoulder—Reſume but thy former ſhape—And I'll be anſwerable for the event.

He bowed aſſent and compliance: Went to the glaſs; and began to untwiſt and unſadden his features: Pull'd his wig right, as if that, as well as his head and heart had been diſcompoſed by his compunction; and once more became old Lucifer's and mine.

But didſt thou think, Jack, that there was ſo much —What-ſhall-I-call-it?—In this Tomlinſon? Didſt thou imagine that ſuch a fellow as that, had bowels? That nature, ſo long dead and buried in him, as to all humane effects, ſhould thus revive and exert itſelf? —Yet why do I aſk this queſtion of thee, who, to my equal ſurprize, haſt ſhewn, on the ſame occaſion, the like compaſſionate ſenſibilities?

As to Tomlinſon, it looks as if Poverty had made him the wicked fellow *he* is; as Plenty and Wantonneſs have made us what *we* are. *Neceſſity*, after all, is the Teſt of Principle. But what is there in this dull word, or thing, called HONESTY, that even I, who

cannot in my preſent views be ſerved by it, cannot help thinking even the accidental Emmanations of it amiable in Tomlinſon, tho' demonſtrated in a *Female caſe*; and judging *better of him* for being capable of ſuch?

LETTER XX.

Mr. LOVELACE, *To* JOHN BELFORD, *Eſq.*

THIS debate between the Captain and me was hardly over, when the three women, led by Miſs Rawlins, entered, hoping No intruſion—But very deſirous, the Maiden ſaid, to know if we were likely to accommodate.

O yes, I hope ſo. You know, Ladies, that your Sex muſt, in theſe caſes, preſerve their forms. They muſt be courted to comply with their own happineſs. A lucky expedient we have hit upon. The Uncle has his doubts of our Marriage. He cannot believe, nor will any-body, that it is poſſible that a man ſo much in Love, the Lady ſo deſirable—

They all took the hint—It was a very extraordinary caſe, the two widows allowed. Women, Jack, [as I believe I have obſerved (*a*) elſewhere] have a high opinion of what they can do for us.—Miſs Rawlins deſired, if I pleaſed, to let them know the Expedient; and looked as if there was no need to proceed in the reſt of my ſpeech.

I begged, that they would not let the Lady know I had told them what this Expedient was; and they ſhould hear it.

They promiſed.

It was this: That to oblige and ſatisfy Mr. Harlowe, the Ceremony was to be *again performed.* He was to be *privately preſent*, and to give his Niece to me with his own hands—And ſhe was retired to conſider of it.

(*a*) See p. 109.

Thou

Thou ſeeſt, Jack, that I have provided an excuſe, to ſave my veracity to the women here, in caſe I ſhould incline to Marriage, and ſhe ſhould chuſe to have Miſs Rawlins's aſſiſtance at the ceremony. Nor doubted I to bring my Fair one to ſave my credit on this occaſion, if I could get her to conſent to be mine.

A charming Expedient! cried the Widow. They were all three ready to clap their hands for joy upon it. Women love to be married twice at leaſt, Jack; tho' not indeed to the *ſame man*. And all bleſſed the reconciliatory Scheme and the propoſer of it; and, ſuppoſing it came from the Captain, they looked at him with pleaſure, while his face ſhined with the applauſe implied. He ſhould think himſelf very happy, if he could bring about a general Reconciliation; and he flouriſhed with his head like my man Will, on his victory over old Grimes; bridling by turns, like Miſs Rawlins in the height of a Prudiſh fit.

But now it was time for the Captain to think of returning to town, having a great deal of buſineſs to diſpatch before morning. Nor was he certain that he ſhould be able again to attend us at Hamſtead before he went home.

And yet, as every thing was drawing towards a criſis, I did not intend that he ſhould leave Hamſtead that night.

A meſſage to the above effect was carried up, at my deſire, by Mrs Moore; with the Captain's compliments, and to know if ſhe had any commands for him to her Uncle?

But I hinted to the women, that it would be proper for them to withdraw, if the Lady did come down; leſt ſhe ſhould not care to be ſo free before *them* on a propoſal ſo particular, as ſhe would be to *us*, who had offered it to her conſideration.

Mrs Moore brought down word, that the Lady was following her. They all three withdrew; and ſhe entered at one door, as they went out at the other.

The Captain accoſted her, repeating the contents of the meſſage ſent up; and deſired that ſhe would give him her commands in relation to the report he was to make to her Uncle Harlowe.

I know not what to ſay, Sir, nor what I would have *you* to ſay, to my Uncle—Perhaps you may have buſineſs in town—Perhaps you need not ſee my Uncle, till I have heard from Miſs Howe; till after Lady Betty—I don't know what to ſay.

I implored the return of that value, which ſhe had ſo generouſly acknowledged once to have had for me. I preſumed, I ſaid, to flatter myſelf that Lady Betty, in her own perſon, and in the name of all my family, would be able, on my promiſed Reformation and Contrition, to pevail in my favour, eſpecially as our proſpects in other reſpects with regard to the general Reconciliation wiſhed for were ſo happy. But let me owe to *your own generoſity*, my deareſt creature, ſaid I, rather than to the mediation of *any perſon on earth*, the forgiveneſs I am an humble ſuitor for. How much more agreeable to *yourſelf*, O beſt beloved of my Soul, muſt it be, as well as *obliging to me*, that your firſt perſonal knowledge of my relations, and theirs of you, (for they will not be denied attending you) ſhould not be begun in recriminations, in appeals? As Lady Betty will be here ſoon, it will not perhaps be poſſible for you to receive her viſit with a brow abſolutely ſerene. But deareſt, deareſt creature, I beſeech you, let the miſunderſtanding paſs as a ſlight one—As a miſunderſtanding cleared up. Appeals give Pride and Superiority to the perſons appealed to, and are apt to leſſen the appellant, not only in their eye, but in her own. Exalt not into judges thoſe who are prepared to take leſſons and inſtructions from you. The individuals of my family are as proud as I am ſaid to be. But they will chearfully reſign to your Superiority—You will be the firſt woman of the family in every one's eyes.

This

This might have done with any other woman in the world but *this*; and yet ſhe is the only woman in the world of whom it may with truth be ſaid. But thus, angrily, did ſhe diſclaim the compliment.

Yes, indeed!—[and there ſhe ſtopt a moment, her ſweet boſom heaving with a noble diſdain]—Cheated out of myſelf from the very firſt!—A fugitive from my own family! Renounced by my relations! Inſulted by you!—Laying humble claim to the protection of yours!—Is not this the light in which I muſt appear not only to the Ladies of your family, but to all the world?—Think you, Sir, that in theſe circumſtances, or even had I been in the *happieſt*, that I could be affected by this plea of undeſerved Superiority?—You are a ſtranger to the mind of Clariſſa Harlowe, if you think her capable of ſo poor and ſo *undue* a pride!

She went from us to the farther end of the room.

The Captain was again affected—Excellent creature! I called her; and, reverently approaching her, urged further the plea I had laſt made.

It is but lately, ſaid I, that the opinions of my relations have been more than indifferent to me, whether good or bad; and it is for *your* ſake, more than for *my own*, that I now wiſh to ſtand well with my whole family. The principal motive of Lady Betty's coming up, is, to purchaſe preſents for the whole family to make on the happy occaſion.

This conſideration, turning to the Captain, with ſo noble-minded a dear creature, I know, can have no weight; only as it will ſhew their value and reſpect. But what a damp would their worthy hearts receive, were they to find their admired new Niece, as they now think her, not only *not* their Niece, but capable of renouncing me for ever! They love me. They *all* love me. I have been guilty of careleſſneſs and levity to them, indeed; but of careleſſneſs and levity only; and *that* owing to a Pride that has ſet me

above meanneſs, though it has not done every-thing for me.

My whole family will be guaranties for my good behaviour to this dear creature, their Niece, their Daughter, their Couſin, their Friend, their choſen Companion and Directreſs, all in one.—Upon my Soul, Captain, we *may*, we *muſt* be happy.

But, deareſt, deareſt creature, let me on my knees [and down I dropt, her face all the time turned half from me, as ſhe ſtood at the window, her handkerchief often at her eyes] on my knees let me plead your *promiſed* forgiveneſs; and let us not appear to them, on their viſit, thus unhappy with each other. Lady Betty, the next hour that ſhe ſees you, will write her opinion of you, and of the likelihood of our future happineſs, to Lady Sarah her Siſter, a weak-ſpirited woman, who now hopes to ſupply to herſelf, in my Bride, the loſt Daughter ſhe ſtill mourns for!

The Captain then joined in, and re-urged her Uncle's hopes and expectations, and his reſolution effectually to ſet about the general Reconciliation; the miſchief that might be prevented; and the certainty that there was, that her Uncle might be prevailed upon to give her to me with his own hand, if ſhe made it her choice to wait for his coming up. But, for his own part, he humbly adviſed, and fervently preſſed her, to make the very next day, or Monday at fartheſt, my happy Day.

Permit me, deareſt Lady, ſaid he, and I could kneel to you myſelf [bending his knee] tho' I have no intereſt in my earneſtneſs, but the pleaſure I ſhould have to be able to ſerve you all; to beſeech you to give me an opportunity to aſſure your Uncle, that I myſelf ſaw with my own eyes the happy knot tied!—All miſunderſtandings, all doubts, all diffidences, will then be at an end.

And what, Madam, rejoined I, ſtill kneeling, can there be in your new meaſures, be they what they will,

will, that can ſo happily, ſo *reputably*, I will preſume to ſay, for all around, obviate the preſent difficulties?

Miſs Howe herſelf, if ſhe love you, and if ſhe love your fame, Madam, urged the Captain, his knee ſtill bent, muſt congratulate you on ſuch a happy concluſion.

Then turning her face, ſhe ſaw the Captain half-kneeling—O Sir! O Capt. Tomlinſon!—Why this *undue* condeſcenſion? extending her hand to his elbow, to raiſe him. I cannot bear this!—Then caſting her eye on me, Riſe, Mr. Lovelace—Kneel not to the poor creature whom you have inſulted!—How cruel the occaſion for it!—And how mean the ſubmiſſion!

Not mean to ſuch an angel!—Nor can I riſe but to be forgiven!

The Captain then re-urged once more the Day—He was amazed, he ſaid, if ſhe ever valued me—

O Captain Tomlinſon, interrupted ſhe, how much are you the friend of this man!—*If I had never valued him, he never would have had it in his power to inſult me*; nor could I, if I had never regarded him, have *taken to heart as I do*, the inſult (execrable as it was) ſo undeſervedly, ſo ungratefully given—But let him retire—For a moment let him retire.

I was more than half afraid to truſt the Captain by himſelf with her. He gave me a ſign that I might depend upon him. And then I took out of my pocket his Letter to me, and Lady Betty's, and Miſs Montague's and Lord M's Letters (which laſt ſhe had not then ſeen); and giving them to him, Procure for me, in the firſt place, Mr. Tomlinſon, a re-peruſal of theſe three Letters; and of *This* from Lord M. And I beſeech you, my deareſt Life, give them due conſideration: And let me on my return find the happy effects of that conſideration.

I then withdrew; with ſlow feet however, and a miſgiving heart.

The Captain inſiſted upon this re-peruſal previouſly to what ſhe had to ſay to him, as he tells me. She com-

complied, but with ſome difficulty; as if ſhe was *afraid* of being *ſoftened in my favour.*

She lamented her unhappy ſituation; deſtitute of friends, and not knowiug whither to go or what to do. She aſked queſtions, *ſifting queſtions*, about her Uncle, about her Family, and after what he knew of Mr. Hickman's fruitleſs application in her favour.

He was well prepared in this particular; for I had ſhewn him the Letters and Extracts of Letters of Miſs Howe, which I had ſo happily come at (*a*) Might ſhe be aſſured, ſhe aſked him, that her Brother, with Singleton and Solmes, were actually in queſt of her?

He averred that they were.

She aſked, if he thought I had hopes of prevailing on her to go back to town?

He was ſure I had not.

Was he really of opinion that Lady Betty would pay her a viſit?

He had no doubt of it.

But, Sir; but, Captain Tomlinſon—[impatiently turning from him, and again to him] I know not what to do—But were I *your* Daughter, Sir—Were *you* my own Father—Alas! Sir, I have neither Father nor Mother!

He turned from her and wiped his eyes.

O Sir! you have humanity! [She wept too.] There are ſome men in the world, thank Heaven, than *can* be moved. O Sir, I have met with hard-hearted men—in my own family too—or I could not have been ſo unhappy as I am—But I make every body unhappy!

His eyes no doubt ran over.—

Deareſt Madam! Heavenly Lady!—Who can—who can—heſitated and blubbered the dog, as he owned. And indeed I heard ſome part of what paſſed, tho' *they both* talked lower than I wiſhed; for, from the nature of *their* converſation, there was no room for altitudes.

(*a*) See Vol. IV. p. 173, & ſeq.

THEM, and BOTH, and THEY!—How it goes againſt me to include this angel of a creature, and any man on earth but myſelf, in *one* word!

Capt. Who can forbear being affected?—But, Madam, you can be no other man's.

Cl. Nor would I be. But he is ſo ſunk with me!—To fire the houſe!—An Artifice ſo vile!—contrived for the worſt of purpoſes!—Would you have a Daughter of yours—But what would I ſay?—Yet you ſee, that I have nobody in whom I can confide!—Mr. Lovelace is a vindictive man!—He could not love the creature whom he could inſult as he has inſulted me!

She pauſed. And then reſuming—In ſhort, I never, never can forgive *him*, nor he *me*.—Do you think, Sir, I would have gone ſo far as I have gone, if I had intended ever to draw with him in one yoke?—I left behind me *ſuch* a Letter—

You know, Madam, he has acknowledged the juſtice of your reſentment—

O Sir, he can acknowledge, and he can retract, fifty times a day—But do not think I am trifling, with myſelf and you, and want to be *perſuaded* to forgive him, and to be *his*. There is not a creature of my Sex, who would have been *more explicit*, and *more frank*, than I would have been, from the moment I *intended* to be his, had I had a heart like my own to deal with. I was always *above Reſerve*, Sir, I will preſume to ſay, where I had no cauſe of Doubt. Mr. Lovelace's conduct has made me appear, perhaps, *over-nice*, when my heart wanted to be *encouraged* and *aſſured!* and when, if it had been ſo, my whole behaviour would have been governed by it.

She ſtopt; her handkerchief at her eyes.

I enquired after the minuteſt part of her behaviour, as well as after her words. I love, thou knoweſt, to trace human nature, and more particularly female nature, thro' its moſt ſecret receſſes.

The

The pitiful fellow was loſt in ſilent admiration of her. And thus the noble creature proceeded.

It is the fate in Unequal Unions, that tolerable creatures, thro' them, frequently incur Cenſure, when more happily yoked, they might be entitled to Praiſe. And ſhall I not ſhun a union with a man, that might lead into errors a creature who flatters herſelf that ſhe is bleſt with an inclination to be good; and who wiſhes to make every one happy with whom ſhe has any connection, even to her very ſervants?

She pauſed, taking a turn about the room—the fellow, devil fetch him, a mummy all the time:—Then proceeded.

Formerly, indeed, I hoped to be an humble means of reforming him. But, when I have *no ſuch hope*, is it right [You are a ſerious man, Sir] to make a venture that ſhall endanger *my own morals!*

Still ſilent was the varlet. If my advocate had nothing to ſay for me, what hope of carrying my cauſe?

And now, Sir, what is the reſult of all?—It is this—That you will endeavour, if you have that influence over him which a man of your ſenſe and experience ought to have, to prevail upon him, and that for *his own* ſake, as well as for *mine*, to leave me free to purſue my own deſtiny. And of this you may aſſure him, that I never will be any other man's.

Impoſſible, Madam! I know that Mr. Lovelace would not hear me with patience on ſuch a topic. And I do aſſure you that I have *ſome ſpirit*, and ſhould not care to take an indignity from him or from any man living.

She pauſed—Then reſuming—And think you, Sir, that my Uncle will refuſe to receive a letter from me? [*How averſe, Jack, to concede a tittle in my favour!*]

I know, Madam, as matters are circumſtanced, that he would not *anſwer* it. If you pleaſe I will carry one down from you.

And

And will he not purſue his intentions in *my* favour, nor be himſelf reconciled to me, except I am married?

From what your Brother gives out, and affects to believe, on Mr. Lovelace's living with you in the ſame—

No more Sir—I am an unhappy creature!

He then re-urged, that it would be in her power inſtantly, or on the morrow, to put an end to all her difficulties.

How can that *be?* ſaid ſhe: The Licence *ſtill* to be obtained? The Settlements *ſtill* to be ſigned? Miſs Howe's Anſwer to my laſt *unreceived?*—And ſhall I Sir, be in ſuch a HURRY, as if I thought my *Honour in danger if I delayed?* Yet *marry* the man from whom only it *can* be endangered!—Unhappy, thrice unhappy Clariſſa Harlowe!—In how many difficulties has one raſh ſtep involved thee!—And ſhe turned from him and wept.

The varlet, by way of comfort, wept too: Yet her tears, as he might have obſerved, were tears that indicated rather a *yielding* than a *perverſe* temper.

There is a Sort of Stone, thou knoweſt, ſo ſoft in the Quarry, that it may in a manner be cut with a Knife; but if the opportunity be not taken, and it is expoſed to the Air for any time, it will become as hard as Marble, and then with difficulty it yields to the Chizel (*a*). So this Lady, not taken at the moment, after a turn or two croſs the room, gained more reſolution! and then ſhe declared, as ſhe had done once before, that ſhe would wait the iſſue of Miſs Howe's Anſwer to the Letter ſhe had ſent her from hence, and take her meaſures accordingly—leaving it to him, mean time to make what report he thought fit, to her Uncle—the kindeſt that *truth* could bear, ſhe doubted not from Captain Tomlinſon: And ſhe ſhould be glad of a few lines from him, to hear what *that* was.

(*a*) The Nature of the Bath Stone, in particular.

She

She wiſhed him a good journey. She complained of her head; and was about to withdraw: But I ſtept round to the door next the ſtairs, as if I had but juſt come in from the garden (which, as I entered, I called a very pretty one) and took her reluctant hand as ſhe was going out: My deareſt Life you are not going? —What hopes, Captain?—Have you not ſome hopes to give me of Pardon and Reconciliation?

She ſaid, She would not be detained. But I would not let her go, till ſhe had promiſed to return, when the Captain had reported to me what her reſolution was.

And when he had, I ſent up and claimed her promiſe; and ſhe came down again, and repeated (as what ſhe was determined upon) that ſhe would wait for Miſs Howe's Anſwer to the Letter ſhe had written to her, and take her meaſures according to its contents.

I expoſtulated with her upon it, in the moſt ſubmiſſive and earneſt manner. She made it neceſſary for me to repeat many of the pleas I had before urged. The Captain ſeconded me with equal earneſtneſs. At laſt, each fell down on our knees before her.

She was diſtreſſed. I was afraid at one time ſhe would have fainted. Yet neither of us would riſe without ſome conceſſions. I pleaded my own ſake; the Captain, his dear friend her Uncle's; and *both* repleaded, the prevention of future miſchief; and the peace and happineſs of the two families.

She owned herſelf unequal to the conflict. She ſighed. She ſobbed. She wept. She wrung her hands.

I was perfectly eloquent in my vows and proteſtations. Her tearful eyes were caſt down upon me; a glow upon each charming cheek; a viſible anguiſh in every lovely feature—At laſt, her trembling knees ſeeming to fail her, ſhe dropt into the next chair; her charming face, as if ſeeking for a hiding place (which a Mother's boſom would have beſt ſupplied) ſinking upon her own ſhoulder.

I forgot

I forgot at the inſtant all my vows of Revenge. I threw myſelf at her feet as ſhe ſat; and, ſnatching her hand, preſſed it with my lips. I beſought Heaven to forgive my paſt offences, and proſper my future hopes, as I deſigned honourably and juſtly by the Charmer of my heart, if once more ſhe ſhould reſtore me to her favour. And I thought I felt drops of ſcalding Water [Could they be tears?] trickle down upon my cheeks; while my cheeks, glowing like fire, ſeem to ſcorch up the unwelcome ſtrangers.

I then aroſe, not doubting of an *implied* pardon in this ſilent diſtreſs. I raiſed the Captain. I whiſpered him—By my Soul, man, I am in earneſt.—Now talk of Reconciliation, of her Uncle, of the Licence, of Settlement—And raiſing my voice, if now at laſt, Captain Tomlinſon, my angel will give me leave to call ſo great a bleſſing mine, it will be impoſſible that you ſhould ſay too much to her Uncle in praiſe of my gratitude, my affection, and fidelity to his charming Niece; and he may begin as ſoon as he pleaſes, his kind Schemes for effecting the deſirable reconciliation!—Nor ſhall he preſcribe any terms to me that I will not comply with.

The Captain bleſſed me with his eyes and hands—Thank God! whiſpered he. We approached the Lady together.

Capt. What hinders, deareſt madam, what now hinders, but that Lady Betty Lawrence, when ſhe comes, may be acquainted with the truth of every thing? And that then ſhe may aſſiſt privately at your Nuptials?—I will ſtay till they are celebrated; and then ſhall go down with the happy tidings to my dear Mr. Harlowe. And all will, all muſt, ſoon be happy.

I muſt have an anſwer from Miſs Howe, replied the ſtill trembling Fair one. I cannot change my new meaſures but with her advice. I will forfeit all my hopes of happineſs in this world, rather than

forfeit her good opinion, and that ſhe ſhould think me giddy, unſteady, or precipitate. All I ſhall further ſay on the preſent ſubject is this, That, when I have her anſwer to what I *have* written, as I will write to her the whole ſtate of the matter, as I ſhall then be enabled to do.

Lovel. Then muſt I deſpair for ever—O Captain Tomlinſon, Miſs Howe hates me!—Miſs Howe—

Capt. Not ſo perhaps—When Miſs Howe knows your concern for having offended, ſhe will never adviſe, that, with ſuch proſpects of general reconciliation, the hopes of ſo many conſiderable perſons in both families ſhould be fruſtrated. Some little time, as this excellent Lady has foreſeen and hinted, will neceſſarily be taken up in actually procuring the Licence, and in peruſing and ſigning the Settlements. In that time Miſs Howe's anſwer may be received; and Lady Betty may arrive; and ſhe, no doubt will have weight to diſſipate the Lady's doubts, and to accelerate the day. It ſhall be my part, mean time, to make Mr. Harlowe eaſy. All I fear from delay is, from Mr. James Harlowe's quarter; and therefore all muſt be conducted with prudence and privacy:—as your Uncle, Madam, has propoſed.

She was ſilent, I rejoiced in her ſilence. The dear creature, thought I, has actually forgiven me in her heart!—But why will ſhe not lay me under obligation to her, by the generoſity of an explicit declaration?—And yet, as that would not accelerate anything, while the Licence is not in my hands, ſhe is the leſs to be blamed (if I do her juſtice) for taking more time to *deſcend.*

I propoſed, as on the morrow night, to go to town; and doubted not to bring the Licence up with me on Monday morning. Would ſhe be pleaſed to aſſure me, that ſhe would not depart from Mrs. Moore's.

She ſhould ſtay at Mrs. Moore's till ſhe had an anſwer from Miſs Howe. I told

I told her, that I hoped I might have her *tacit* conſent at leaſt to the obtaining of the Licence.

I ſaw by the turn of her countenance that I ſhould not have aſked this queſtion. She was ſo far from *tacitly* conſenting, that ſhe declared to the contrary.

As I never intended, I ſaid, to aſk her to enter again into a houſe, with the people of which ſhe was ſo much offended, would ſhe be pleaſed to give orders for her cloaths to be brought up hither? Or ſhould Dorcas attend her for any of her commands on that head?

She deſired not ever more to ſee any-body belonging to that houſe. She might perhaps get Mrs. Moore or Mrs. Bevis to go thither for her, and take her keys with them.

I doubted not, I ſaid, that Lady Betty would arrive by that time. I hoped ſhe had no objection to my bringing that Lady and my couſin Montague up with me?

She was ſilent.

To be ſure, Mr. Lovelace, ſaid the Captain, the Lady can have no objection to this.

She was ſtill ſilent. So ſilence in this caſe was aſſent.

Would ſhe be pleaſed to write to Miſs Howe?—

Sir! Sir! peeviſhly interrupting—No more queſtions; No preſcribing to me—You will do as you think fit. So will I, as I pleaſe. I own no obligation to you. Captain Tomlinſon, your Servant. Recommend me to my Uncle Harlowe's favour. And was going.

I took her reluctant hand, and beſought her only to promiſe to meet me early in the morning.

To what purpoſe meet you? Have you more to ſay than has been ſaid—I have had enough of vows and proteſtations, Mr. Lovelace. To what purpoſe ſhould I meet you to-morrow morning?

I repeated my requeſt, and that in the moſt fervent manner, naming Six in the morning.

"You know that I am always ſtirring before that "hour, at this ſeaſon of the year," was the half-expreſſed conſent.

She then again recommended herſelf to her Uncle's favour; and withdrew.

And thus, Belford, has ſhe *mended her markets*, as Lord M. would ſay, and I worſted mine. Miſs Howe's next Letter is now the hinge on which the fate of both muſt turn. I ſhall be abſolutely ruined and undone, if I cannot intercept it.

LETTER XXI.

Mr. LOVELACE, *To* JOHN BELFORD, *Eſq.*

Sat. Midnight.

NO Reſt, ſays a text that I once heard preached upon, *to the wicked*—And I cannot cloſe my eyes (yet only wanted to compound for half an hour in an elbow-chair)—So muſt ſcribble on.

I parted with the Captain after another ſtrong debate with him in relation to what is to be the Fate of this Lady. As the fellow has an excellent head, and would have made an eminent figure in any ſtation of life, had not his early days been tainted with a deep crime, and he detected in it; and as he had the right ſide of the argument; I had a good deal of difficulty with him; and at laſt brought myſelf to promiſe, that if I could prevail upon her generouſly to forgive me, and to reinſtate me in her favour, I would make it my whole endeavour to get off of my contrivances, as happily as I could (only that Lady Betty and Charlotte *muſt come*); and then ſubſtituting him for her Uncle's proxy, take ſhame to myſelf and marry.

But if I ſhould Jack, (with the ſtrongeſt antipathy to the State that ever man had) what a figure ſhall I make in Rakiſh Annals? And can I have taken all this pains for nothing? Or for a Wife only, that, however excellent [and *any* woman, do I think I could

could make good, becauſe I could make any woman *fear* as well as *love* me] might have been obtained without the plague I have been at, and much more reputably than with it? And haſt thou not ſeen, that this haughty woman [Forgive me that I call her *haughty!* and a *woman!* Yet is ſhe not haughty?] knows not how to forgive with graciouſneſs? Indeed has not at all forgiven me? But holds my Soul in a *ſuſpenſe* which has been ſo grievous to her own.

At this ſilent moment, I think, that if I were to purſue my former ſcheme, and reſolve to try whether I cannot make a greater fault ſerve as a ſponge to wipe out the leſs; and then be forgiven for that; I can juſtify myſelf to *myſelf*; and that, as the fair Invincible would ſay, is all in all.

As it is my intention, in all my reflections, to avoid repeating, at leaſt dwelling upon, what I have before written to thee, tho' the State of the Caſe may not have varied; ſo I would have thee to re-conſider the *old* reaſonings (particularly thoſe contained in my anſwer to thy laſt (*a*) expoſtulary nonſenſe; and add the *new* as they fall from my pen; and then I ſhall think myſelf invincible;—at leaſt, as arguing Rake to Rake.

I take the gaining of this Lady to be eſſential to my happineſs: And is it not natural for *all* men to aim at obtaining whatever they think will make them happy, be the object more or leſs conſiderable in the eyes of others?

As to the manner of endeavouring to obtain her, by falſification of oaths, vows, and the like—Do not the poets of two thouſand years and upwards tell us, that Jupiter laughs at the perjuries of Lovers? And let me add to what I have heretofore mentioned on that head, a queſtion or two.

Do not the Mothers the Aunts, the Grandmothers, the Governeſſes of the pretty Innocents, al-

(*a*) See Vol. IV. Letter lvii.

ways, from their very cradles to riper years, preach to them the deceitfulneſs of men?—That they are not to regard their oaths, vows, promiſes?—What a parcel of fibbers would all theſe reverend matrons be, if there were not now and then a pretty credulous rogue taken in for a juſtification of their preachments, and to ſerve as a beacon lighted up for the benefit of the reſt?

Do we not then ſee, that an honeſt prowling fellow is a neceſſary evil on many accounts? Do we not ſee that it is highly requiſite that a ſweet girl ſhould be now-and-then drawn aſide by him?—And the more eminent the girl, in the graces of perſon, mind, and fortune, is not the example likely to be the more efficacious?

If theſe *poſtulata* be granted me, who, I pray, can equal my Charmer in all theſe? Who therefore ſo fit for an Example to the reſt of the Sex?—At worſt, I am entirely within my worthy friend Mandeville's aſſertion, *That private Vices are public Benefits.*

Well then, if this ſweet creature muſt *fall*, as it is called, for the benefit of all the pretty fools of the Sex, ſhe *muſt*; and there's an end of the matter. And what would there have been in it of uncommon or rare, had I not been ſo long about it?—And ſo I diſmiſs all further argumentation and debate upon the queſtion: And I impoſe upon thee, when thou writeſt to me, an eternal ſilence on this head.

Wafer'd on, as an after-written introduction to the paragraphs which follow, marked with turned comma's [thus,"]:

LORD, Jack, what ſhall I do now!—How one evil brings on another!—Dreadful news to tell thee!—While I was meditating a ſimple robbery, here have I (in my own defence indeed) been guilty of murder! A bloody murder!—So I believe it will prove.

prove.—At her laſt gaſp!—Poor impertinent oppoſer! Eternally reſiſting!—Eternally contradicting! There ſhe lies, weltering in her blood! her death's wound have I given her!—But ſhe was a thief, an impoſtor, as well as a tormentor. She had ſtolen my pen.—While I was ſullenly meditating, doubting, as to my future meaſures, ſhe ſtole it; and thus ſhe wrote with it, in a hand exactly like my own; and would have faced me down, that it was really my own hand-writing.

" But let me reflect, before it be too late. On the " manifold perfections of this ever-amiable creature " let me reflect. The hand yet is only held up. " The blow is not ſtruck. Miſs Howe's next Let- " ter may blow thee up. In policy thou ſhouldeſt " be now at leaſt honeſt. Thou can'ſt not live with- " out her. Thou wouldeſt rather marry her than " loſe her abſolutely. Thou mayeſt undoubtedly " prevail upon her, inflexible as ſhe ſeems to be, for " Marriage. But if now ſhe find thee a villain, " thou mayeſt never more engage her attention, and " ſhe perhaps will refuſe and abhor thee.

" Yet already have I not gone too far? Like a " repentant thief, afraid of his gang, and obliged " to go on, in fear of hanging till he comes to be " hanged, I am afraid of the gang of my curſed con- " trivances.

" As I hope to live, I am ſorry (at the preſent " writing) that I have been ſuch a fooliſh plotter, as " to put it, as I fear I have done, out of my *own* " *power* to be honeſt. I hate compulſion in all forms; " and cannot bear, even to be *compelled* to be the " wretch my choice has made me!—So now, Bel- " ford, as thou haſt ſaid, I am a machine at laſt, and " no free agent.

" Upon my ſoul, Jack, it is a very fooliſh thing " for a man of ſpirit to have brought himſelf to ſuch " a height of iniquity, that he muſt proceed, and

" cannot help himſelf; and yet to be next to certain,
" that this very victory will undo him.
" Why was ſuch a woman as this thrown into my
" way, whoſe very fall will be her glory, and perhaps
" not only my ſhame, but my deſtruction?
" What a happineſs muſt that man know, who
" moves regularly to ſome laudable end, and has no-
" thing to reproach himſelf with in his progreſs to
" it! When, by honeſt means, he attains his end,
" how great and unmixed muſt be his enjoyments!
" What a happy man, in this particular caſe, had I
" been, had it been given me to *be* only what I wiſhed
" to *appear* to be!"

Thus far had my *Conſcience* written with my pen; and ſee what a recreant ſhe had made of me!—I ſeized her by the throat---*There!*—*There*, ſaid I, thou vile impertinent!—Take *that*, and *that!*—How often have I gave thee warning!—and now, I hope, thou intruding varleteſs, have I done thy buſineſs!

Puleing and low-voiced, rearing up thy deteſted head, in vain imploreſt thou *my* mercy, who, in *thy* day haſt ſhewed me ſo little!—Take *that*, for a riſing blow!—And now will *thy* pain, and *my* pain from *thee*, ſoon be over.—Lie there!—Welter on!—Had I not given thee thy death's wound, thou wouldeſt have robbed me of all my joys. Thou couldeſt not have mended me, 'tis plain. Thou couldeſt only have thrown me into deſpair. Didſt thou not ſee, that I had gone too far to recede?—Welter on, once more I bid thee!—Gaſp on!—*That* thy laſt gaſp ſurely!—How hard dieſt thou!

ADIEU!—Unhappy Man! ADIEU!

'Tis kind in thee, however, to bid me *Adieu!*—Adieu, Adieu, Adieu, to thee, O thou inflexible, and, till now, unconquerable boſom intruder!—Adieu to thee for ever!

LETTER XXII.

Mr. LOVELACE, *To* JOHN BELFORD, *Esq.*

Sunday Morn. (*June* 11.) 4 *o'Clock.*

A Few words to the verbal information thou senteſt me laſt night concerning thy poor old man; and then I riſe from my ſeat, ſhake myſelf, refreſh, new-dreſs, and ſo to my Charmer, whom, notwithſtanding her reſerves, I hope to prevail upon to walk out with me on the Heath, this warm and fine morning.

The birds muſt have awakened her before now. They are in full ſong. She always gloried in accuſtoming herſelf to behold the Sun-riſe; one of God's natural wonders, as once ſhe called it.

Her window ſalutes the Eaſt. The Valleys muſt be gilded by his rays, by the time I am with her; for already have they made the Up-lands ſmile, and the face of nature chearful.

How unſuitable wilt thou find this gay preface to a ſubject ſo gloomy, as that I am now turning to!

I am glad to hear thy tedious expectations are at laſt anſwered.

Thy ſervant tells me, that thou art plaguily grieved at the old fellow's departure.

I can't ſay, but thou may'ſt *look* as if thou wert: harraſſed as thou haſt been for a number of days and nights with a cloſe attendance upon a dying man, beholding his drawing-on hour—Pretending, for decency's ſake, to whine over his excruciating pangs—To be in the way to anſwer a thouſand impertinent enquiries after the health of a man thou wiſhedſt to die—To pray by him—for ſo once thou wroteſt to me!—To read by him—To be forced to join in conſultation with a crew of ſolemn and parading Doctors, and their officious Zanies the Apothecaries, joined with the butcherly tribe of Scarificators; all combined to carry on the phyſical farce, and to cut out thongs

both from his fleſh and his eſtate—To have the ſuper-added apprehenſion of dividing thy intereſt in what he ſhall leave with a crew of eager-hoping, never-to-be-ſatisfied relations, legatees, and the devil knows who, of private gratifiers of paſſions laudable and illaudable —In theſe circumſtances, I wonder not that thou lookeſt before ſervants (as little grieved at heart as thyſelf, and who are gaping after legacies, as thou after *heirſhip*) as if thou indeed wert grieved; and as if the moſt wry-fac'd woe had befallen thee.

Then, as I have often thought, the reflection that muſt naturally ariſe from ſuch mortifying objects, as the death of one with whom we have been familiar, muſt afford, when we are obliged to attend it in its ſlow approaches, and in its face-twiſting pangs, that it will one day be our own caſe, goes a great way to credit the appearance of grief.

And This it is that, ſeriouſly reflected upon, may temporarily give a fine air of ſincerity to the wailings of lively Widows, heart-exulting Heirs, and Reſiduary Legatees of all denominations; ſince, by keeping down the inward joy, thoſe intereſting reflections muſt ſadden the aſpect, and add an appearance of real concern to the aſſumed Sables.

Well, but, now thou art come to the Reward of all thy watchings, anxieties, and cloſe attendances, tell me what it is; tell me if it compenſate thy trouble, and anſwer thy hope?

As to myſelf, thou ſeeſt, by the gravity of my ſtyle, how the ſubject has helped to mortify me. But the neceſſity I am under of committing either ſpeedy Matrimony, or a rape, has ſaddened over my gayer proſpects, and, more than the caſe itſelf, contributed to make me ſympathize with thy preſent joyful ſorrow.

Adieu, Jack, I muſt be ſoon out of my pain; and my Clariſſa ſhall be ſoon out of hers—For ſo does the arduouſneſs of the caſe require.

LETTER XXIII.

Mr. LOVELACE, *To* JOHN BELFORD, *Esq.*

Sunday Morning.

I Have had the honour of my Charmer's company for two complete hours. We met before Six in Mrs. Moore's garden. A walk on the Heath refused me.

The sedateness of her aspect, and her kind compliance in this meeting, gave me hopes. And all that either the Captain or I had urged yesterday to obtain a full and free pardon, that re-urged I; and I told her, besides, that Captain Tomlinson was gone down with hopes to prevail upon her Uncle Harlowe to come up in person, in order to present to me the greatest blessing that man ever received.

But the utmost I could obtain was, That she would take no resolution in my favour till she received Miss Howe's next Letter.

I will not repeat the arguments I used: But I will give thee the Substance of what she said in answer to them.

She had considered of every thing, she told me. My whole conduct was before her. The house I carried her to must be a vile house. The people early shewed what they were capable of, in the earnest attempt made to fasten Miss Partington upon her; as she doubted not, with my approbation—[Surely, thought I, she has not received a duplicate of Miss Howe's Letter of detection!] They heard her cries. My insult was undoubtedly premeditated. By my whole recollected behaviour to her, previous to it, it must be so. I had the vilest of views, no question. And my treatment of her put it out of all doubt.

Soul all over, Belford! she seems sensible of liberties that my passion made me insensible of having taken, or she could not so deeply resent.

She beſought me to give over all thoughts of her. Sometimes, ſhe ſaid, ſhe thought herſelf cruelly treated by her neareſt and deareſt relations: At *ſuch* times, a ſpirit of repining and even of reſentment took place; and the reconciliat on at other times ſo deſirable, was not then ſo much the favourite wiſh of her heart, as was the ſcheme ſhe had formerly planned—of taking her good Norton for her directreſs and guide, and living upon her own Eſtate in the manner her Grandfather had intended ſhe ſhould live.

This Scheme ſhe doubted not that her Couſin Morden, who was one of her Truſtees for that Eſtate, would enable her (and that, as ſhe hoped, without litigation) to purſue. And if he can, and does, what Sir, let me aſk you, ſaid ſhe, have I ſeen in your conduct, that ſhould make me prefer to it an Union of Intereſt, where there is ſuch a Diſunion in Minds?

So thou ſeeſt, Jack, there is *reaſon*, as well as *reſentment*, in the preference ſhe makes againſt me!—Thou ſeeſt, that ſhe preſumes to think that ſhe can be happy *without* me; and that ſhe muſt be unhappy *with* me!

I had beſought her, in the concluſion of my re-urged arguments, to write to Miſs Howe before Miſs Howe's anſwer could come, in order to lay before her the preſent ſtate of things; and if ſhe *would* pay a deference to her judgment, to let her have an opportunity to give it, on the full knowlege of the caſe—

So I would, Mr. Lovelace, was the anſwer, if I were in doubt myſelf, which I would prefer; Marriage, or the Scheme I have mentioned. You cannot think, Sir, but the latter muſt be my choice. I wiſh to part with you with temper—Don't put me upon repeating—

Part with me, Madam! interrupted I—I cannot bear thoſe words!—But let me beſeech you, however, to write to Miſs Howe. I hope, if Miſs Howe is not my enemy—

She

She is not the enemy of your *perſon*, Sir ;—as you would be convinced, if you *ſaw her laſt Letter* (*a*) *to me*. But were ſhe not an enemy to your *actions*, ſhe would not be *my* friend, nor the friend of *virtue*. Why will you provoke from me, Mr. Lovelace, the harſhneſs of expreſſion, which, however deſerved by you, I am unwilling juſt now to uſe, having ſuffered enough in the two paſt days from my own vehemence?

I bit my lip for vexation. I was ſilent.

Miſs Howe, proceeded ſhe, knows the full ſtate of matters already, Sir. The anſwer I expect from her reſpects *myſelf*, not *you*. Her heart is too warm in the cauſe of friendſhip, to leave me in ſuſpenſe one moment longer than is neceſſary, as to what I want to know. Nor does her anſwer abſolutely depend upon herſelf. She muſt ſee a perſon firſt ; and that perſon perhaps ſee others.

The curſed Smuggler-woman, Jack! —— Miſs Howe's Townſend, I doubt not!—Plot, contrivance, intrigue, ſtratagem!—Underground Moles theſe women—But let the earth cover me! let me be a Mole too, thought I, if they carry their point!—And if this Lady eſcape me now!

She frankly owned, that ſhe had once thought of embarking *out of all our ways* for ſome one of our American Colonies: But now that ſhe had been *compelled* to ſee me (which had been her greateſt dread, and which ſhe would have given her life to avoid) ſhe thought ſhe might be happieſt in the reſumption of her former favourite ſcheme, if Miſs Howe could find her a reputable and private aſylum, till her Couſin Morden could come. But if he came not ſoon, and if ſhe had a difficulty to get to a place of refuge, whether from her Brother or from *any body elſe* [meaning me, I ſuppoſe] ſhe might yet perhaps go abroad:

(*a*) The Lady innocently means Mr. Lovelace's forged one. See p. 154, & ſeq.

For,

For, to ſay the truth, ſhe could not think of returning to her Father's houſe; ſince her Brother's rage, her Siſter's upbraidings, her Father's anger, her Mother's ſtill more-affecting ſorrowings, and her own conſciouſneſs under them all, would be inſupportable to her.

O Jack! I am ſick to death, I pine, I die, for Miſs Howe's next Letter! I would bind, gag, ſtrip, rob, and do any thing but murder, to intercept it.

But, determined as ſhe ſeems to be, it was evident to me, nevertheleſs, that ſhe had ſtill ſome tenderneſs for me.

She often wept as ſhe talked, and much oftener ſigh'd. She looked at me twice with an eye of *undoubted* gentleneſs, and three times with an eye *tending* to compaſſion and ſoftneſs: But its benign rays were as often *ſnatched* back, as I may ſay, and her face averted, as if her ſweet eyes were not to be truſted, and could not ſtand againſt my eager eyes; ſeeking, as they did, for a loſt heart in hers, and endeavouring to penetrate to her very ſoul.

More than once I took her hand. She ſtruggled not *much* againſt the freedom. I preſſed it once with my lips. She was not *very* angry. A frown indeed; but a frown that had more diſtreſs in it than indignation.

How came the dear ſoul (clothed as it is with ſuch a ſilken veſture) by all its Steadineſs (*a*)?—Was it neceſſary, that the active gloom of ſuch a tyrant of a *Father*, ſhould commix with ſuch a paſſive ſweetneſs of a will-leſs *Mother*, to produce a Conſtancy, an Equanimity, a Steadineſs, in the *Daughter*, which never woman before could boaſt of?—If ſo, ſhe is more obliged to that deſpotic Father than I could have imagined a creature to be, who gave diſtinction to

(*a*) See Vol. I. p. 50, 51. 86. 126, 127. for what ſhe herſelf ſays on that Steadineſs which Mr. Lovelace, tho' *a deſerved* ſufferer by it, cannot help admiring.

every

every one related to her beyond what the Crown itſelf can confer.

I hoped, I ſaid, that ſhe would admit of the intended viſit, which I had ſo often mentioned, of the two Ladies.

She was *here*. She had ſeen *me*. She could not help herſelf at preſent. She ever had the higheſt regard for the Ladies of my family, becauſe of their worthy characters. There ſhe turned away her ſweet face, and vanquiſhed an half-riſen ſigh.

I kneeled to her then. It was upon a verdant cuſhion; for we were upon the graſs-walk. I caught her hand. I beſought her with an earneſtneſs that called up, as I could feel, my heart to my eyes, to make me, by her Forgiveneſs and Example, more worthy of them, and of her own kind and generous wiſhes. By by Soul, Madam, ſaid I, you ſtab me with your goodneſs, your undeſerved goodneſs! and I cannot bear it!

Why, why, thought I, as I did ſeveral times in this converſation, will ſhe not *generouſly* forgive me? Why will ſhe make it neceſſary for me to bring Lady Betty and my Couſin to my aſſiſtance? Can the Fortreſs expect the ſame advantageous capitulation, which yields not to the ſummons of a reſiſtleſs conqueror, as if it gave not the trouble of bringing up, and raiſing its heavy artillery againſt it?

What *Senſibilities*, ſaid the divine Creature, withdrawing her hand, muſt thou have ſuppreſſed!—What a dreadful, what a judicial hardneſs of heart muſt thine be; who canſt be capable of ſuch emotions as ſometimes thou haſt ſhewn; and of ſuch ſentiments, as ſometimes have flowed from thy lips; yet canſt have ſo far overcome them all, as to be able to act as thou haſt acted, and that from ſettled purpoſe and premeditation; and this, as it is *ſaid*, throughout the whole of thy life, from infancy to this time!

I told her, that I had hoped, from the generous

concern

concern ſhe had expreſſed for me, when I was ſo ſuddenly and dangerouſly taken ill—[The Ipecacuanha experiment, Jack !]

She interrupted me—Well have you rewarded me for the concern you ſpeak of !—However, I will frankly own, now that I am determined to think no more of you, that you might (unſatisfied as I nevertheleſs was with you) have made an intereſt—

She pauſed. I beſought her to proceed.

Do you ſuppoſe, Sir, and turned away her ſweet face as we walked ; do you ſuppoſe, that I had not thought of laying down a plan to govern myſelf by, when I found myſelf ſo unhappily over-reached and cheated, as I may ſay, out of myſelf—When I found, that I could not *be*, and *do*, what I wiſhed *to be*, and *to do*, do you imagine, that I had not caſt about, what was the *next* proper courſe to take?—And do you believe, that this *next* courſe has not coſt me ſome pain, to be obliged to—

There again ſhe ſtopt.

But let us break off diſcourſe, reſumed ſhe. The ſubject grows too—She ſighed—Let us break off diſcourſe—I will go in—I will prepare for church—[The devil ! thought I.] Well as I *can* appear in theſe every day worn cloths—looking upon herſelf—I will go to church.

She then turned from me to go into the houſe.

Bleſs me, my beloved Creature, bleſs me with the continuance of this affecting converſation—Remorſe has ſeized my heart !—I have been exceſſively wrong—Give me further cauſe to curſe my heedleſs folly, by the contiuance of this calm, but ſoul-penetrating converſation.

No, no, Mr. Lovelace. I have ſaid too much. Impatience begins to break in upon me. If you can excuſe me to the Ladies, it will be better for my Mind's ſake, and for your Credit's ſake, that I do not ſee them. Call me to *them* over-nice, petulant, prudiſh ;

what you pleaſe call me to them. Nobody but Miſs Howe, to whom, next to the Almighty, and my own Mother, I wiſh to ſtand acquitted of wilful error, ſhall know the whole of what has paſſed. Be happy, as you may!—*Deſerve* to be happy, and happy you will be, in your own reflection at leaſt, were you to be ever ſo unhappy in other reſpects. For myſelf, if I ſhall be enabled, on due reflection, to look back upon my own conduct, without the great reproach of having wilfully, and againſt the light of my own judgment, erred, I ſhall be more happy than if I had all that the world accounts deſirable.

The noble creature proceeded; for I could not ſpeak.

This ſelf-acquittal, when ſpirits are lent me to diſpel the darkneſs which at preſent too often overclouds my mind, will I hope, make me ſuperior to all the calamities that can befal me.

Her whole perſon was informed by her ſentiments. She ſeemed to be taller than before. How the God within her exalted her, not only above me, but above herſelf!

Divine creature! (as I *thought* her) I *called* her. I acknowleged the ſuperiority of her mind; and was proceeding—But ſhe interrupted me—All human excellence, ſaid ſhe, is comparative only. My Mind, I believe, is indeed ſuperior to yours, debaſed as yours is by evil habits: But I had not known it to be ſo, if you had not *taken pains* to convince me of the inferiority of yours.

How great, how ſublimely great, this creature!—By my ſoul, I cannot forgive her for her Virtues! There is no bearing the conſciouſneſs of the infinite inferiority ſhe charged me with.—But why will ſhe break from me, when good reſolutions are taking place?—The red-hot iron ſhe refuſes to ſtrike—O why will ſhe ſuffer the yielding wax to harden?

We had gone but a few paces towards the houſe,

when

when we were met by the impertinent women, with notice, that breakfaſt was ready. I could only, with up-lifted hands, beſeech her to give me hope of a renewed converſation after breakfaſt.

No; ſhe would go to church.

And into the houſe ſhe went, and up-ſtairs directly. Nor would ſhe oblige me with her company at the Tea-table.

I offered by Mrs. Moore to quit both the table and the parlour, rather than ſhe ſhould exclude herſelf, or deprive the two widows of the favour of her company.

That was not all the matter ſhe told Mrs. Moore. She had been ſtruggling to keep down her temper. It had coſt her ſome pains to do it. She was deſirous to compoſe herſelf, in hopes to receive benefit by the Divine Worſhip ſhe was going to join in.

Mrs. Moore hoped for her preſence at dinner.

She had rather be excuſed. Yet, if ſhe could obtain the frame of mind ſhe hoped for, ſhe might not be averſe to ſhew, that ſhe had got above thoſe Senſibilities, which gave conſideration to a man who deſerved not to be to her what he had been.

This ſaid, no doubt, to let Mrs. Moore know, that the garden-converſation had not been a reconciling one.

Mrs. Moore ſeemed to wonder, that we were not upon a better foot of underſtanding, after ſo long a conference; and the more, as ſhe believed, that the Lady had given in to the propoſal for the repetition of the Ceremony, which I had told them was inſiſted upon by her Uncle Harlowe. But I accounted for this, by telling both widows, that ſhe was reſolved to keep on the reſerve, till ſhe heard from Capt. Tomlinſon, whether her Uncle would be preſent in perſon at the Solemnity, or would name that worthy gentleman for his proxy.

Again I enjoined ſtrict ſecrecy, as to this particular; which was promiſed by the widows, as well for themſelves, as for Miſs Rawlins; of whoſe taciturnity

they

they gave me ſuch an account, as ſhewed me, that ſhe was *Secret-keeper-general* to all the women of faſhion at Hamſtead.

'The Lord, Jack! What a world of miſchief, at this rate, muſt Miſs Rawlins know?—What a Pandora's box muſt her boſom be?—Yet, had I nothing that was more worthy of my attention to regard, I would engage to open it, and make my uſes of the diſcovery.

And now, Belford, thou perceiveſt, that all my reliance is upon the mediation of Lady Betty and Miſs Montague, and upon the hope of intercepting Miſs Howe's next Letter.

LETTER XXIV.

Mr. LOVELACE, *To* JOHN BELFORD, *Eſq.*

THE fair Inexorable is actually gone to church, with Mrs. Moore and Mrs. Bevis. But Will. cloſely attends her motions; and I am in the way to receive any occaſional intelligence from him.

She did not *chuſe* [A mighty word with the Sex! as if they were *always* to have their own wills!] that I ſhould wait upon her. I did not much preſs it, that ſhe might not apprehend, that I thought I had reaſon to doubt her voluntary return.

I once had it in my head to have found the widow Bevis other employment. And I believe ſhe would have been as well pleaſed with my company as to go to church; for ſhe ſeemed irreſolute when I told her, that two out of a family were enough to go to church for one day. But having her Things on (as the women call every-thing) and her Aunt Moore expecting her company, ſhe thought it beſt to go—*Leſt it ſhould look oddly, you know*, whiſpered ſhe, to one who was above regarding how it looked.

So here am I in my Dining-room; and have nothing to do but to write, till they return.

And

And what will be my ſubject, thinkeſt thou!—Why, the old beaten one, to be ſure; Self debate—thro' temporary remorſe: For the blow being not ſtruck, her guardian angel is redoubling his efforts to ſave her.

If it be not *that* [And yet what power ſhould *her* guardian angel have over *me?*] I don't know what it is, that gives a check to my revenge, whenever I meditate treaſon againſt ſo ſovereign a virtue. Conſcience is dead and gone, as I told thee; ſo it cannot be that. A young Conſcience growing up, like the phœnix, from the aſhes of the old one, it cannot be ſurely. But if it were, it would be hard, if I could not overlay a young Conſcience.

Well, then, it muſt be Love, I fancy. Love itſelf, inſpiring Love of an object ſo adorable—Some little attention poſſibly paid likewiſe to thy whining arguments in her favour.

Let Love then be allowed to be the moving principle; and the rather, as Love naturally makes the Lover loth to diſoblige the object of its flame; and knowing, that an offence of the *meditated* kind will be a mortal offence to her, cannot bear that I ſhould think of giving it.

Let Love and me talk together a little on this ſubject—Be it a *Young Conſcience*, or *Love*, or *Thyſelf*, Jack, thou ſeeſt that I am for giving every whiffler audience. But *this* muſt be the laſt debate on this ſubject; for is not her fate in a manner at its criſis? And muſt not my next ſtep be an irretrievable one, tend it which way it will?

* * * *
* *

And now the debate is over.

A thouſand charming things (for Love is gentler than Conscience) has this little urchin ſuggeſted in her favour.

He pretended to know both our hearts: And he would have it, that though my love was a prodigious

ſtrong

ſtrong and potent Love; and tho' it has the merit of many months faithful ſervice to plead, and has had infinite difficulties to ſtruggle with; yet that it is not THE RIGHT SORT OF LOVE.

Right ſort of Love!—A puppy!—But, with due regard to your deityſhip, ſaid I, what merits has ſhe with YOU, that *you* ſhould be of her party? Is *hers*, I pray you, a *right ſort of Love?* Is it *Love* at all? She don't *pretend* that it is. She owns not your ſovereignty. What a d——l moves *you*, to plead thus earneſtly for a rebel, who deſpiſes your power?

And then he came with his *If's* and *And's*—And it would *have been*, and *ſtill*, as he believed, would be, Love, and a Love of the exalted kind, if I would encourage it by the *right ſort of Love* he talked of: And, in juſtification of his opinion, pleaded her own confeſſions, as well thoſe of yeſterday, as of this morning: And even went ſo far back as to my Ipecacuanha-illneſs.

I never talked ſo familiarly with his godſhip before: Thou mayeſt think therefore that this dialect ſounded oddly in my ears. And then he told me, how often I had thrown cold water upon the moſt charming flame that ever warmed a Lady's boſom, while but young and riſing.

I required a definition of this *right ſort* of Love He tried at it: But made a ſorry hand of it: Nor could I, for the ſoul of me, be convinced, that what he meant to extol, was LOVE.

Upon the whole, we had a notable controverſy upon this ſubject, in which he inſiſted upon the *unprecedented merit* of the Lady. Nevertheleſs I got the better of him; for he was ſtruck abſolutely dumb, when (waving her preſent perverſeneſs, which yet was a ſufficient anſwer to all his pleas) I aſſerted, and offered to prove it, by a thouſand inſtances *impromptu*, that Love was not governed by *merit*, nor could be under the dominion of *prudence*, or any other *rea-*

ſoning

ſoning power: And if the Lady were capable of Love, it was of ſuch a ſort of Love, *as he had nothing to do with*, and which never before reigned in a female heart.

I aſked him, What he thought of her flight from me, at a time when I was more than half overcome by the *right ſort of Love* he talked of?—And then I ſhewed him the Letter ſhe wrote, and left behind her for me, with an intention, no doubt, abſolutely to break my heart, or to provoke me to hang, drown, or ſhoot myſelf; to ſay nothing of a multitude of declarations from her, defying his power, and imputing all that looked like Love in her behaviour to me, to the perſecution and rejection of her friends; which made her think of me but as a laſt reſort.

LOVE then gave her up. The Letter, he ſaid, deſerved neither pardon nor excuſe. He did not think he had been pleading for ſuch a *declared* rebel. And as to the reſt, he ſhould be a betrayer of the rights of his own ſovereignty, if what I had alleged were true, and he were ſtill to plead for her.

I ſwore to the truth of all. And *truly* I ſwore: Which perhaps I do not always do.

And now what thinkeſt thou muſt become of the Lady, whom LOVE itſelf gives up, and CONSCIENCE cannot plead for?

LETTER XXV.

Mr. LOVELACE, *To* JOHN BELFORD, *Eſq.*

Sunday afternoon.

O Belford! what a hair's-breadth eſcape have I had!—Such a one, that I tremble between terror and joy, at the thoughts of what *might* have happened, and did not.

What a perverſe girl is this, to contend with her Fate; yet has reaſon to think, that her very Stars fight againſt her! I am the luckieſt of men!—But my

my breath almoſt fails me, when I reflect upon what a ſlender thread my deſtiny hung.

But not to keep them in ſuſpence; I have, within this half-hour, obtained poſſeſſion of the expected Letter from Miſs Howe—And by *ſuch* an accident! But here, with the former, I diſpatch this; thy meſſenger waiting.

LETTER XXVI.

Mr. LOVELACE. *In Continuation.*

THUS it was—My Charmer accompanied Mrs. Moore again to church this afternoon. I had been very earneſt, in the *firſt* place, to obtain her company at dinner: But in vain. According to what ſhe had ſaid to Mrs. Moore (*a*), I was *too conſiderable* to her to be allowed that favour. In the *next* place, I beſought her to favour me, after dinner, with another garden-walk. But ſhe *would* again go to church. And what reaſon have I to rejoice that ſhe did!

My worthy friend Mrs. Bevis thought one Sermon a day, *well* obſerved, enough; ſo ſtaid at home to bear me company.

The Lady and Mrs. Moore had not been gone a quarter of an hour, when a young Country-fellow on horſeback came to the door, and enquired for Mrs. *Harriot Lucas.* The widow and I (undetermined how we were to entertain each other) were in the parlour next the door; and hearing the fellow's enquiry, O my dear Mrs. Bevis, ſaid I, I am undone, undone for ever, if you don't help me out!—Since here, in all probability, is a meſſenger from that implacable Miſs Howe with a Letter; which, if delivered to Mrs. Lovelace, may undo all we have been doing.

What, ſaid ſhe would you have me do?

Call the maid in this moment, that I may give her

(*a*) See p. 234.

her

her leſſon; and if it be as I imagined, I'll tell you what you ſhall do.

Wid. Margaret!—Margaret! come in this minute.

Lovel. What anſwer, Mrs. Margaret, did you give the man, upon his aſking for Mrs. *Harriot Lucas?*

Peggy. I only aſked, What was his buſineſs, and who he came from? (For, Sir, your honour's ſervant had told me how things ſtood): And I came at your call, Madam, before he anſwered me.

Lovel. Well, child, if ever you wiſh to be happy in wedlock yourſelf, and would have people diſappointed, who want to make miſchief between you and your huſband, get out of him his Meſſage, or Letter if he has one, and bring it to me, and ſay nothing to Mrs. Lovelace, when ſhe comes in; and here is a guinea for you.

Peggy. I will do all I can to ſerve your Honour's Worſhip for nothing [Nevertheleſs, with a ready hand, taking the guinea]: For Mr. William tells me what a good gentleman you be.

Away went Peggy to the fellow at the door.

Peggy. What is your buſineſs, friend, with Mrs. *Harry Lucas?*

Fellow. I muſt ſpeak to her her own ſelf.

Lovel. My *deareſt* widow, do you perſonate Mrs. Lovelace—For Heaven's ſake do you perſonate Mrs. Lovelace.

Wid. I perſonate Mrs Lovelace, Sir! How can I do that?—She is fair; I am brown. She is ſlender: I am plump—

Lovel. No matter, no matter—The fellow may be a new-come ſervant: He is not in livery, I ſee. He may not know her perſon. You can but be bloated and in a dropſy.

Wid. Dropſical people look not ſo freſh and ruddy as I do.

Lovel. True—But the clown may not know That. 'Tis but for a preſent deception.

Peggy

Peggy, Peggy, call'd I, in a female tone, ſoftly at the door. Madam, anſwer'd Peggy; and came up to me to the parlour-door.

Lovel. Tell him the Lady is ill; and has lain down upon the couch. And get his buſineſs from him, whatever you do.

Away went Peggy.

Lovel. Now, my dear widow, lie along on the Settee, and put your handkerchief over your face, that, if he *will* ſpeak to you himſelf, he may not ſee your eyes and your hair.—So—That's right.—I'll ſtep into the cloſet by you.

I did ſo.

Peggy [returning.] He wont deliver his buſineſs to me. He will ſpeak to Mrs. Harriot Lucas her own ſelf.

Lovel. [holding the door in my hand] Tell him, that This is Mrs. Harriot Lucas; and let him come in. Whiſper him (if he doubts) that ſhe is bloated, dropſical, and not the woman ſhe was.

Away went Margery.

Lovel. And now, my dear widow, let me ſee what a charming Mrs. Lovelace you'll make!—Aſk, If he comes from Miſs Howe. Aſk, If he lives with her. Aſk, How ſhe does. Call her, at every word, your dear Miſs Howe. Offer him money—Take this half guinea for him—Complain of your head, to have a pretence to hold it down; and cover your forehead and eyes with your hand, where your handkerchief hides not your face.—That's right—And diſmiſs the raſcal—[Here he comes]—as ſoon as you can.

In came the fellow, bowing and ſcraping, his hat poked out before him with both his hands.

Fellow. I am ſorry, Madam, an't pleaſe you, to find you be'n't well.

Widow. What is your buſineſs with me, friend?

Fellow. You are Mrs. Harriot Lucas, I ſuppoſe, Madam?

Widow. Yes. Do you come from Miſs Howe?

Fellow. I do, Madam.

Widow. Doſt thou know my right name, friend?

Fellow. I can give a ſhrewd gueſs. But that is none of my buſineſs.

Widow. What is thy buſineſs? I hope Miſs Howe is well?

Fellow. Yes, Madam; pure well, I thank God. I wiſh you were ſo ſoo.

Widow. I am too full of grief to be well.

Fellow. So belike I have *hard* to ſay.

Widow. My head akes ſo dreadfully, I cannot hold it up. I muſt beg of you to let me know your buſineſs.

Fellow. Nay, and that he all, my buſineſs is ſoon known. It is but to give this letter into your own *partiklar* hands—Here it is.

Widow [*taking it*] From my dear friend Miſs Howe?—Ah, my head!

Fellow. Yes, Madam: But I am ſorry you are ſo bad.

Widow. Do you live with Miſs Howe?

Fellow. No, Madam: I am one of her tenant's ſons. Her Lady-mother muſt not know as how I came of this errand. But the Letter, I ſuppoſe, will tell you all.

Widow. How ſhall I ſatisfy you for his kind trouble?

Fellow. Na how at all. What I do is for Love of Miſs Howe. She will ſatisfy me more than enough. But, may-hap, you can ſend no anſwer, you are ſo ill.

Widow. Was you ordered to wait for an anſwer?

Fellow. No, I cannot ſay as that I was. But I was bidden to obſerve how you looked, and how you was; and if you did write a line or ſo, to take care of it, and give it only to our young Landlady, in ſecret.

Widow. You ſee I look ſtrangely. Not ſo well as I uſed to do.

Fellow. Nay, I don't know that I ever ſaw you

but

but once before; and that was at a Stile, where I met you and my young Landlady; but knew better than to ſtare a gentlewoman in the face; eſpecially at a Stile.

Widow. Will you eat, or drink, friend?

Fellow. A cup of ſmall Ale, I don't care if I do.

Widow. Margaret, take the young man down, and treat him with what the houſe affords.

Fellow. Your Servant, Madam. But I ſtaid to eat as I come along, juſt upon the heath yonder; or elſe, to ſay the truth, I had been here ſooner [*Thank my Stars, thought I, thou didſt.*] A piece of powdered beef was upon the table, at the ſign of the Caſtle, where I ſtopt to enquire for this houſe: And ſo, thoff I only intended to wet my whiſtle, I could not help eating. So ſhall only taſte of your Ale; for the beef was woundily corned.

Prating dog! Pox on thee! thought I.

He withdrew, bowing and ſcraping.

Margaret, whiſpered I, in a female voice [whipping out of the cloſet, and holding the parlour-door in my hand] Get him out of the houſe as faſt as you can, leſt they come from church, and catch him here.

Peggy. Never fear, Sir.

The fellow went down, and it ſeems, drank a large draught of Ale; and Margaret finding him very talkative, told him, She begged his pardon; but ſhe had a Sweetheart juſt come from Sea, whom ſhe was forced to hide in the pantry; ſo was ſure he would excuſe her from ſtaying with him.

Ay, ay, to be ſure, the clown ſaid: *For if he could not make ſport, he would ſpoil none.* But he whiſpered her, that one 'Squire Lovelace was a *damnation rogue*, if the truth might be told.

For what? ſaid Margaret. And could have given him, ſhe told the widow (who related to me all this) a good dowſe of the chaps.

For kiſſing all the women he came near.

At the ſame time, the dog wrapped himſelf round Margery, and gave her a ſmack, that, ſhe told Mrs. Bevis afterwards, ſhe might have heard into the parlour.

Such, Jack, is human nature: Thus does it operate in all degrees; and ſo does the clown, as well as his betters, practiſe what he cenſures; and cenſure what he practiſes! Yet this ſly dog knew not but the wench had a ſweetheart locked up in the pantry! If the truth were known, ſome of the ruddy-face dairy wenches might perhaps call him a *damnation rogue*, as juſtly as their betters of the ſame ſex might 'Squire Lovelace.

The fellow told the maid, that, by what he diſcovered of the young Lady's face, it looked very *roſy* to what he took it to be; and he thought her a good deal fatter, as ſhe lay, and not ſo tall.

All women are born to intrigue, Jack; and practiſe it more or leſs, as Fathers, Guardians, Governeſſes, from dear experience can tell; and in Love-affairs are naturally expert, and quicker in their wits by half than men. This ready, tho' raw wench, gave an inſtance of this, and improved on the dropſical hint I had given her. The Lady's ſeeming plumpneſs was owing to a dropſical diſorder, and to the round poſture ſhe lay in—*Very likely, truly.* Her appearing to him to be ſhorter, he might have obſerved was owing to her drawing her feet up, from pain, and becauſe the couch was too ſhort, ſhe ſuppoſed—*Adſo, he did not think of that.* Her roſy colour was owing to her grief and head-ake—*Ay, that might very well be*—But he was highly pleaſed that he had given the Letter into Mrs. Harriot's own hand, as he ſhould tell Miſs Howe.

He deſired once more to ſee the Lady at his going away, and would not be denied. The Widow therefore ſat up, with her handkerchief over her face, leaning her head againſt the wainſcot.

He

He aſked, If ſhe had any *partiklar* meſſage?

No: She was ſo ill ſhe could not write; which was a great grief to her.

Should he call next day? for he was going to London, now he was ſo near; and ſhould ſtay at a Couſin's that night, who lived in a ſtreet called Fetter-lane.

No: She would write as ſoon as able, and ſend by the poſt.

Well then, if ſhe had nothing to ſend by him, mayhap he might ſtay in town a day or two; for he had never ſeen the Lions in the Tower, nor Bedlam, nor the Tombs; and he would make a holiday or two, as he had leave to do, if ſhe had no buſineſs or meſſage that required his poſting down next day.

She had not.

She offered him the half-guinea I had given her for him; but he refuſed it, with great profeſſions of diſintereſtedneſs, and Love, as he called it, to Miſs Howe; to ſerve whom, he would ride to the World's-end, or *even* to Jericho.

And ſo the ſhocking raſcal went away: And glad at my heart was I when he was gone; for I feared nothing ſo much as that he would have ſtaid till they came from church.

Thus, Jack, got I my *heart's-eaſe*, the Letter of Miſs Howe; and thro' ſuch a train of accidents, as makes me ſay, that the Lady's Stars fight againſt her. But yet I muſt attribute a good deal to my own precaution, in having taken right meaſures For had I not ſecured the widow by my ſtories, and the maid by my ſervant, all would have ſignified nothing. And ſo heartily were they ſecured, the one by a ſingle guinea, the other by half a dozen warm kiſſes, and the averſion they both had to ſuch wicked creatures as delighted in making miſchief between Man and Wife, that they promiſed, that neither Mrs. Moore, Miſs Rawlins, Mrs. Lovelace, nor any body living, till a

weak at leaſt were paſt, and till I gave leave, ſhould know any-thing of the matter.

The widow rejoiced that I had got the miſchief-maker's Letter. I excuſed myſelf to her, and inſtantly withdrew with it; and, after I had read it, fell to my ſhort-hand, to acquaint thee with my good luck: And they not returning ſo ſoon as church was done (ſtepping, as it proved, in to Miſs Rawlins's, and tarrying there a-while, to bring that buſy girl with them to drink tea) I wrote thus far to thee, that thou mighteſt, when thou cameſt to this place, rejoice with me upon the occaſion.

They are all three juſt come in.

I haſten to them.

LETTER XXVII.

Mr. LOVELACE, *To* JOHN BELFORD, *Eſq.*

I Have begun another Letter to thee, in continuation of my Narrative: But I believe I ſhall ſend thee this before I ſhall finiſh that. By the incloſed thou wilt ſee, that neither of the correſpondents deſerve mercy from me: And I am reſolved to make the Ending with one, the Beginning with the other.

If thou ſayeſt, That the provocations I have given to *one* of them, will juſtify *her* freedoms; I anſwer, So they *will*, to any other perſon but myſelf. But he that is capable of giving thoſe provocations, and has the power to puniſh thoſe who abuſe him *for* giving them, *will* ſhew his reſentment; and the more remorſeleſly, perhaps, as he has *deſerved* the freedoms.

If thou ſayeſt, It is, however, wrong to do ſo; I reply, that it is nevertheleſs human nature:—And wouldſt thou not have me to be a *man*, Jack?

Here read the Letter, if thou wilt. But thou art not my friend, if thou offereſt to plead for either of the ſaucy creatures, after thou *haſt* read it.

To

To Mrs. HARRIOT LUCAS *at Mrs.* MOORE'S *at* Hamſtead.

AFTER the diſcoveries I had made of the villainous machinations of the *moſt abandoned of men*, particularized in my long Letter of Wedneſday (*a*) laſt, you will believe, my deareſt friend, that my ſurprize upon peruſing yours of Thurſday evening from Hamſtead (*b*) was not ſo great as my indignation. Had the *villain* attempted to fire a city inſtead of an houſe, I ſhould not have wondered at it. All that I am amazed at, is, that he (whoſe boaſt, as I am told, it is, *that no woman ſhall keep him out of her bedchamber, when he has made a reſolution to be in it*) did not diſcover *his foot* before. And it is as ſtrange to me, that, having got you at ſuch a ſhocking advantage, and in ſuch a horrid houſe, you could, at the time, *eſcape diſhonour*, and afterwards get from ſuch a ſet of *infernals*.

I gave you, in my long Letter of Wedneſday and Thurſday laſt, reaſons why you ought to miſtruſt that ſpecious Tomlinſon. That man, my dear, muſt be a ſolemn villain. *May lightning from Heaven blaſt the wretch, who has ſet him, and the reſt of his* REMORSELESS GANG, *at work, to endeavour to deſtroy the moſt conſummate virtue!*—Heaven be praiſed! you have eſcaped from all their ſnares, and *now are out of danger*.—So I will not trouble you at preſent with the particulars that I have further collected relating to this abominable impoſture.

For the ſame reaſon, I forbear to communicate to you ſome *new Stories* of the *abhorred wretch himſelf* which have come to my ears. One in particular, of ſo *ſhocking* a nature!—Indeed, my dear, the man's a devil.

The whole Story of Mrs. Fretchville, and her houſe, I have no doubt to pronounce, likewiſe, an

(*a*) See p. 30—46. (*b*) See p. 50—56.

abſolute fictions.—*Fellow!—How my ſoul ſpurns the villain!*

Your thought of going abroad, and your reaſons for ſo doing, moſt ſenſibly affect me. But be comforted, my dear; I hope you will not be under a neceſſity of quitting your native country. Were I ſure, that That muſt be the cruel caſe, I would abandon all my own better proſpects, and ſoon be with you. And I would accompany you whitherſoever you went, and ſhare fortunes with you: For it is impoſſible that I ſhould be happy, if I knew that you were expoſed not only to the perils of the ſea, but to the attempts of other vile men; your perſonal graces attracting every eye, and expoſing you to thoſe hourly dangers, which others, leſs diſtinguiſhed by the gifts of Nature, might avoid.—All that I know, that Beauty (ſo greatly coveted, and ſo greatly admired) is good for.

O, my dear, were I ever to marry, and to be the mother of a CLARISSA [*Clariſſa* muſt be the name, if promiſingly lovely] how often would my heart ache for the dear creature, as ſhe grew up, when I reflected, that a prudence and diſcretion unexampled in woman, had not, in *you*, been a ſufficient protection to that Beauty, which had drawn after it as many admirers as beholders!—How little ſhould I regret the attacks of that *cruel* diſtemper, as it is called, which frequently makes the greateſt ravages in the fineſt faces!

Sat. Afternoon.

I HAVE juſt parted with Mrs. Townſend (*a*). I thought you had once ſeen her with me: But ſhe ſays, ſhe never had the honour to be perſonally known to you. She has a *manlike ſpirit*. She knows the world. And her two Brothers being in town, ſhe is ſure ſhe can engage *them* in ſo good a cauſe, and (if

(*a*) For the account of Mrs. Townſend, &c. ſee Vol. IV. p. 152—154.

there

there ſhould be occaſion) *both their Ships Crews*, in your ſervice.

Give your conſent, my dear; and the *horrid villain* ſhall be repaid with *broken bones*, *at leaſt*, for all his vileneſs!

The misfortune is, Mrs. Townſend cannot be with you till *Thurſday next*, or *Wedneſday*, *at ſooneſt*: Are you ſure you can be ſafe where you are, till then? I think you are too near London; and perhaps you had better be *in it*. If you remove, let me, the very moment, know *whither*.

How my heart is torn, to think of the neceſſity ſo dear a creature is driven to, of hiding herſelf! *Deviliſh fellow!* He muſt have been ſportive and wanton in his inventions—Yet that cruel, that ſavage ſportiveneſs has ſaved you from the ſudden violence to which he has had recourſe in the violation of others, of names and families not contemptible. For ſuch the *villain* always gloried to ſpread his ſnares.

The *vileneſs* of this *ſpecious monſter* has done more, than any other conſideration could do, to bring Mr. Hickman into credit with me. Mr. Hickman alone knows (for me) of your flight, and the reaſon of it. Had I not given him the reaſon, he might have thought *ſtill worſe* of the vile attempt. I communicated it to him by ſhewing him your letter from Hamſtead. When he had read it [*and he trembled and reddened*, as he read] he threw himſelf at my feet, and beſought me to permit him to attend you, and to give you the protection of his houſe. The good-natured man had tears in his eyes, and was repeatedly earneſt on this ſubject; propoſing to take his chariot-and-four, or a ſet, and in perſon, in the face of all the world, give himſelf the glory of protecting ſuch an oppreſſed innocent.

I could not but be pleaſed with him. And I let him know that I was. I hardly expected ſo much ſpirit from him. But a man's paſſiveneſs to a beloved object

of our Sex may not, perhaps, argue want of courage on proper occaſions.

I thought I ought, in return, to have ſome conſideration for his ſafety, as ſuch an open ſtep would draw upon him the vengeance of the moſt *villainous enterpriſer* in the world, who has always a *gang of fellows*, ſuch as himſelf, at his call, ready to ſupport one another in the vileſt outrages. But yet, as Mr. Hickman might have ſtrengthened his hands by legal recourſes, I ſhould not have ſtood upon it, had I not known your delicacy [ſince ſuch a ſtep muſt have made a great noiſe, and given occaſion for ſcandal, as if ſome advantage had been gained over you] and were there not the greateſt probability, that all might be more ſilently, and more effectually, managed by Mrs. Townſend's means.

Mrs. Townſend will in perſon attend you—She *hopes*, on Wedneſday—Her Brothers, and ſome of their people, will ſcatteringly, and as if they knew nothing of you [So we have contrived] ſee you ſafe not only to London, but to her houſe at Deptford.

She has a kinſwoman, who will take your commands there, if ſhe herſelf be obliged to leave you. And there you may ſtay, till the wretch's fury on loſing you, and his ſearch, are over.

He will very ſoon, 'tis likely, enter upon ſome *new villainy*, which may engroſs him: And it may be given out, that you are gone to lay claim to the protection of your Couſin Morden at Florence.

Poſſibly, if he can be made to believe it, he will go over, in hopes to find you there.

After a while, I can procure you a lodging in one of our neighbouring villages: where I may have the happineſs to be your daily viſitor. And if this Hickman be not ſilly and apiſh, and if my mother do not do unaccountable things, I may the ſooner think of marrying, that I may, without controul, receive and entertain the darling of my heart.

Many

Many, very many, happy days do I hope we ſhall yet ſee together: And as this is *my* hope, I expect, that it will be *your* conſolation.

As to your Eſtate, ſince you are reſolved not to litigate for it, we will be patient, either till Colonel Morden arrives, or till ſhame compels ſome people to be juſt.

Upon the whole, I cannot but think your proſpects *now* much happier, than they could have been, had you been actually married to ſuch a man as this. I muſt therefore congratulate you upon your eſcape, not only from an *horrid Libertine*, but from *ſo vile a Huſband*, as he *muſt* have made to any woman; but more eſpecially to a perſon of your virtue and delicacy.

You hate him, heartily hate, him, I hope, my dear —I am *ſure* you do. It would be ſtrange, if ſo much purity of life and manners were not to abhor what is ſo repugnant to itſelf.

In your Letter before me, you mention one written to me for a *feint* (*a*). I have not received any ſuch. Depend upon it therefore, that he muſt have it. And if he has, it is a wonder, that he did not likewiſe get my long one of the 7th. Heaven be praiſed that he did not; *and that it came ſafe to your hands!*

I ſend this by a young fellow, whoſe father is one of our tenants, with command to deliver it to no other hands but yours. He is to return directly, if you give him any Letter. If not, he will proceed to London upon his own pleaſures. He is a ſimple fellow; but very honeſt. So you may ſay any thing to him. If you write not by him, I deſire a line or two, as ſoon as poſſible.

My mother knows nothing of *his* going to you: Nor yet of your abandoning the *fellow*. Forgive me! But he is not entitled to good manners.

I ſhall long to hear how you and Mrs. Townſend

(*a*) See p. 53, 59.

order matters. I wiſh ſhe could have been with you ſooner. But I have loſt no time in engaging her, as you will ſuppoſe. I refer to *her*, what I have further to ſay and adviſe. So ſhall conclude with my prayers, that Heaven will direct and protect my deareſt creature, and make your future days happy!

ANNA HOWE.

And now, Jack, I will ſuppoſe, that thou haſt read this curſed Letter. Allow me to make a few obſervations upon ſome of its contents.

It is ſtrange to Miſs Howe, that having got her friend at ſuch a ſhocking advantage, &c.] And it is ſtrange to me, too. If ever I have ſuch another opportunity given to me, the cauſe of both our wonder, I believe, will ceaſe.

So thou ſeeſt Tomlinſon is further detected. No ſuch perſon as Mrs. Fretchville. *May lightning from heaven*—O Lord, O Lord, O Lord!—What an horrid Vixen is this!—My *gang*, my *remorſeleſs gang*, too, is brought in—And thou wilt plead for theſe girls again; wilt thou?—*Heaven be praiſed*, ſhe ſays, that her friend is out of danger—Miſs Howe ſhould be ſure of *that*: And that ſhe herſelf is ſafe.—But for this termagant (as I often ſaid) I muſt ſurely have made a better hand of it—

New Stories of me, Jack!—What can they be?—I have not found, that my generoſity to my Roſebud ever did me *due* credit with this pair of friends. Very hard, Belford, that Credits cannot be ſet againſt Debits, and a balance ſtruck in a Rake's favour, as well as in that of every *common* man!—But he, from whom no good is expected, is not allowed the merit of the good he does.

I ought to have been a little more attentive to *character*, than I have been. For, notwithſtanding that the meaſures of Right and Wrong are ſaid to be ſo

manifeſt,

manifeſt, let me tell thee, that *character* byaſſes and runs away with all mankind. Let a man or woman once eſtabliſh themſelves in the world's opinion, and all that either of them do will be ſanctified. Nay, in the very Courts of Juſtice, does not *character* acquit or condemn as often as facts, and ſometimes even in ſpite of facts?—Yet, [impolitic that I have been and am!] to be ſo careleſs of mine!—And now, I doubt, it is irretrievable.—But to leave moralizing.

Thou, Jack, knoweſt almoſt all my enterprizes worth remembring. Can this particular ſtory, which this girl hints at, be that of Lucy Villars?—Or can ſhe have heard of my intrigue with the pretty Gypſey, who met me in Norwood, and of the trap I caught her cruel Huſband in [A fellow, as gloomy and tyrannical as old Harlowe] when he purſued a wife, who would not have deſerved ill of *him*, if he had deſerved well of *her*!—But he was not quite drowned. The man is alive at this day: and Miſs Howe mentions the Story as a very ſhocking one. Beſides, both theſe are a twelvemonth old, or more.

But evil fame and ſcandal are always *new*. When the offender has forgot a vile fact it is often told to one and to another, who, having never heard of it before, trumpet it about as a novelty to others. But well ſaid the honeſt corregidor at Madrid [A ſaying with which I enriched Lord M's collection]—*Good actions are remembered but for a day: Bad ones for many years after the life of the guilty.*—Such is the reliſh that the world has for ſcandal. In other words, Such is the deſire which every one has to exculpate himſelf by blackening his neighbour. You and I, Belford, have been very kind to the world, in furniſhing it with opportunities to gratify its devil.

Miſs Howe will abandon her own better proſpects, and ſhare fortunes with her, were ſhe to go abroad.]—Charming Romancer!—I muſt ſet about this girl, Jack. I have always had hopes of a woman whoſe

paſſions carry her into ſuch altitudes! —Had I attacked Miſs Howe firſt, her paſſions (inflamed and guided, as I could have managed them) would have brought her to my lure in a fortnight.

But thinkeſt thou [and yet I think thou doſt] that there is any-thing in theſe high flights among the Sex? Verily, Jack, theſe vehement friendſhips are nothing but chaff and ſtubble, liable to be blown away by the very wind that raiſes them. Apes! mere apes of *us!* they think the word *friendſhip* has a pretty ſound with it; and it is much talked of; a faſhionable word: And ſo, truly, a ſingle woman, who thinks ſhe has a Soul, and knows that ſhe wants ſomething, would be thought to have found a fellow-ſoul for it in her own Sex. But I repeat, that the word is a *mere* word, the thing a *mere* name with them; a cork-bottomed ſhuttle-cock, which they are fond of ſtriking to and fro, to make one another glow in the froſty weather of a Single State; but which, when a *man* comes in between the pretended *inſeparables*, is given up, like their Muſic, and other maidenly amuſements; which, nevertheleſs, may be neceſſary to keep the pretty rogues out of active miſchief. They then, in ſhort, having caught the *fiſh*, lay aſide the *net* (*a*)

Thou haſt a mind, perhaps, to make an exception for theſe two Ladies. With all my heart. My Clariſſa has, if *woman* has, a Soul capable of friendſhip. Her flame is bright and ſteady. But Miſs Howe's, were it not kept up by her mother's oppoſition, is too vehement to endure. How often have I known oppoſition not only cement Friendſhip, but create Love? I doubt not but poor Hickman would fare the better

(*a*) He alludes here to the ſtory of a Pope, who (once a poor fiſherman) thro' every preferment he roſe to, even to that of the Cardinalate, hung up in view of all his gueſts, his Net, as a token of humility. But, when he arrived at the Pontificate, he took it down, ſaying, That there was no need of the Net, when he had caught the Fiſh.

with

with this Vixen, if her Mother were as heartily againſt him, as ſhe is for him.

Thus much indeed, as to theſe two Ladiess, I will grant thee: that the active ſpirit of the one, and the meek diſpoſition of the other, may make their friendſhip more durable than it would otherwiſe be; for this is certain, that in every friendſhip, whether male or female, there muſt be a man and a woman ſpirit (that is to ſay, one of them, a *forbearing* one) to make it permanent.

But this I pronounce, as a truth, which all experience confirms; that friendſhip between women never holds to the ſacrifice of capital gratifications, or to the endangering of life, limb, or eſtate, as it often does in our nobler Sex.

Well, but next comes an indictment againſt poor *Beauty!*—What has Beauty done, that *Miſs Howe* ſhould be offended at it?—Miſs Howe, Jack, is a charming girl. *She* has no reaſon to quarrel with Beauty!—Didſt ever ſee her?—Too much fire and ſpirit in her eye indeed, for a girl!—But that's no fault with a man, that can lower that fire and ſpirit at pleaſure; and I know I am the man that can.

A ſweet auburn Beauty is Miſs Howe. A firſt Beauty among Beauties, when her ſweeter friend [with ſuch an aſſemblage of ſerene gracefulneſs, of natural elegance, of native ſweetneſs, yet conſcious, tho' not arrogant, dignity, every feature glowing with intelligence] is not in company.

The difference between the two, when together, I have ſometimes delighted to *read*, in the addreſſes of a Stranger entering into the preſence of both, when ſtanding ſide by ſide. There never was an inſtance on ſuch an occaſion where the ſtranger paid not his firſt devoirs to my Clariſſa.

A reſpectful ſolemn awe ſat upon every feature of the addreſſer's face. His eye ſeemed to aſk leave to approach her; and lower than common, whether

man

man or woman, was the bow or court'ſy. And altho' this awe was immediately diminiſhed by her condeſcending ſweetneſs, yet went it not ſo entirely off, but that you might ſee the reverence remain, as if the perſon ſaw more of the goddeſs than of the woman in her.

But the moment the ſame Stranger turns to Miſs Howe (tho' proud and ſaucy, and erect and bridling, ſhe) you will obſerve by the turn of his countenance, and the air of his addreſs, a kind of equality aſſumed. He appears to have diſcovered the woman in her, charming as that woman is. He ſmiles. He ſeems to expect repartee and ſmartneſs, and is never diſappointed. But then viſibly he prepares himſelf to *give* as well as *take*. He dares, after he has been a while in her company, to diſpute a point with her—Every point yielded up to the other, tho' no aſſuming or dogmatical air compels it.

In ſhort, with Miſs Howe, a bold man ſees [No doubt but Sir Georbe Colmar did] that he and ſhe may either very ſoon be familiar together [I mean with innocence] or he may ſo far incur her diſpleaſure, as to be forbid her preſence for ever.

For my own part, when I was firſt introduced to this Lady, which was by my goddeſs when ſhe herſelf was a viſitor at Mrs. Howe's; I had not been half an hour with her, but I even hungered and thirſted after a Romping-bout with the lively rogue; and in the ſecond or third viſit, was more deterred by the delicacy of her friend, than by what I apprehended from her own. This charming creature's preſence, thought I, awes us both. And I wiſhed her abſence. tho' any other woman were preſent, that I might try the difference in Miſs Howe's behaviour before her friend's face, or behind her back.

Delicate women *make* delicate women, as well as decent men. With all Miſs Howe's fire and ſpirit, it was eaſy to ſee, by her very eye, that ſhe watched

for

for leſſons, and feared reproof, from the penetrating eye of her milder diſpoſition'd friend (*a*): And yet it was as eaſy to obſerve, in the candour and ſweet manners of the other, that the fear which Miſs Howe ſtood in of her, was more owing to her own generous apprehenſion that ſhe fell ſhort of her excellencies, than to Miſs Harlowe's conſciouſneſs of excellence over *her*. I have often, ſince I came at Miſs Howe's Letters, revolved this juſt and fine praiſe contained in one of them (*b*): 'Every one ſaw, that the prefer-
'ence they gave *you* to *themſelves* exalted you not
'into any viſible triumph over them; for you had
'always ſomething to ſay, on every point you carried,
'that raiſed the yielding heart, and left every one
'pleaſed and ſatisfied with themſelves, tho' they car-
'ried not off the palm.'

As I propoſe in a more advanced life, to endeavour to atone for my uſeful freedoms with individuals of the Sex, by giving cautions and inſtructions to the whole, I have made a memorandum to enlarge upon this doctrine;—to wit, That it is full as neceſſary to direct daughters in the choice of their female companions, as it is to guard them againſt the deſigns of men.

I ſay not this, however, to the diſparagement of Miſs Howe. She has from *pride*, what her friend has from *principle* [The Lord help the Sex, if they had not pride!]—But yet I am confident, that Miſs Howe is indebted to the converſation and correſpondence of Miſs Harlowe for her higheſt improvements. But, both theſe Ladies out of the queſtion, I make no ſcruple to aver [And I, Jack, ſhould know ſomething of the matter] that there have been more girls

(*a*) Miſs Howe, in Vol. III. p. 89. ſays, *That ſhe was always more afraid of* Clariſſa *than of her Mother*; and, in Vol. III. p. 208. *That ſhe fears her almoſt as much as ſhe loves her*; and in many other places, in her Letters, verifies this obſervation of Lovelace.

(*b*) Vol. IV. p. 62.

ruined

ruined, at leaſt *prepared* for ruin, by their own Sex (taking in ſervants as well as companions) than *directly* by the attempts and deluſions of men.

But it is time enough when I am old and joyleſs, to enlarge upon this topic.

As to the compariſon between the two Ladies, I will expatiate more on that ſubject (for I like it) when I have *had them both*. Which this Letter of the Vixen girl's, I hope thou wilt allow, warrants me to try for.

I return to the conſideration of a few more of its contents, to juſtify my vengeances ſo nearly now in view.

As to Mrs. Townſend; her manlike ſpirit; her two brothers; and the Ships crews—I ſay nothing but this to the inſolent threatening—Let 'em come!—But as to her ſordid menace—To *repay the horrid villain*, as ſhe calls me, *for all my vileneſs*, by BROKEN BONES!—Broken bones, Belford!—Who can bear this porterly threatening!—Broken bones, Jack!—Damn the little vulgar—Give me a name for her—But I baniſh all *furious* reſentment. If I get theſe two girls into my power, Heaven forbid that I ſhould be a ſecond Phalaris, who turn'd his Bull upon the artiſt! No bones of their's will I break---They ſhall come off with me upon much lighter terms!—

But theſe fellows are Smugglers, it ſeems. And am not I a Smuggler too?—I am; and have not the leaſt doubt, but I ſhall have ſecured my goods before Thurſday, or Wedneſday either.

But did I want a plot, what a charming new one does this Letter of Miſs Howe ſtrike me out? I am almoſt ſorry, that I have fixed upon one.—For here, how eaſy would it be for me, to aſſemble a crew of Swabbers, and to create a Mrs. Townſend (whoſe perſon, thou ſeeſt, my Beloved knows not) to come on Tueſday, at Miſs Howe's repeated ſolicitations, in order to carry my Beloved to a warehouſe of my own providing?

This,

This, however, is my triumphant hope, that at the very time, that theſe Ragamuffins will be at Hamſtead (looking for us) my dear Miſs Harlowe and I [So the Fates, I imagine, have ordained] ſhall be faſt aſleep in each other's arms in town.—Lie ſtill, villain, till the time comes.—My heart, Jack! my heart!—It is always thumping away on the remoteſt proſpects of this nature.

But is ſeems, that *the vileneſs of this ſpecious monſter* [meaning me, Jack!] has brought Hickman into credit with her. So I have done *ſome* good! But to whom I cannot tell: For this poor fellow, ſhould I permit him to have this termagant, will be puniſhed, as many times we all are, by the enjoyment of his own wiſhes—Nor can ſhe be happy, as I take it, with him, were he to govern himſelf by her will, and have none of his own; ſince never was there a directing wife, who knew where to ſtop: Power makes ſuch a one wanton—She deſpiſes the man ſhe can govern. Like Alexander, who wept, that he had no more worlds to conquer, ſhe will be looking out for new exerciſes for her power, till ſhe grow uneaſy to herſelf, a diſcredit to her huſband, and a plague to all about her.

But this honeſt fellow, it ſeems, *with tears in his eyes*, and with *humble proſtration*, beſought the Vixen to *permit* him to ſet out in his *chariot-and-four*, in order to *give himſelf the glory of protecting ſuch an oppreſſed innocent, in the face of the whole world.* Nay, he *reddened*, it ſeems; and *trembled* too! as he read the fair complainant's Letter.—How *valiant* is all this!—Women love *brave* men; and no wonder, that his *tears*, his *trembling*, and his *proſtration*, gave him high reputation with the meek Miſs Howe.

But doſt think, Jack, that I in the like caſe (and equally affected with the diſtreſs) ſhould have acted thus? Doſt think, that I ſhould not firſt have reſcued the Lady, and then, if needful, have aſked excuſe

for

for it, the Lady in my hand?—Would'ſt not *thou* have done thus, as well as I?

But, 'tis beſt as it is. Honeſt Hickman may now ſleep in a whole ſkin. And yet that is more perhaps than he would have done (the Lady's deliverance *unattempted*) had I come at this *requeſted permiſſion* of his any other way than by a Letter that it muſt not be known I have intercepted.

Miſs Howe thinks I may be diverted from purſuing my Charmer, by ſome new-ſtarted *villainy*. *Villainy* is a word that ſhe is extremely fond of. But I can tell her, that it is impoſſible I ſhould, till the End of this *villainy* be obtained. Difficulty is a *ſtimulus* with ſuch a ſpirit as mine. I thought Miſs Howe knew me better. Were ſhe to offer herſelf, perſon for perſon, in the romancing zeal of her friendſhip, to ſave her friend, it ſhould not do, while the dear creature is on this ſide the moon.

She thanks Heaven, that her friend has received her Letter of the 7th. We are all glad of it. She ought to thank me too. But I will not at preſent claim her thanks.

But when ſhe rejoices that the Letter went ſafe, does ſhe not, in effect, call out for vengeance, and *expect* it!—All in good time, Miſs Howe. *When ſetteſt thou out for the Iſle of Wight, Love?*

I will cloſe at this time with deſiring thee to make a *Liſt* of the virulent terms with which the incloſed Letter abounds: Add then, if thou ſuppoſeſt, that I have made ſuch another, and have added to it all the Flowers of the ſame Blow, in the former Letters of the ſame ſaucy creature, and thoſe in that of Miſs Harlowe which ſhe left for me on her elopement, thou wilt certainly think, that I have provocations ſufficient to juſtify me in all that I ſhall do to either.

Return the incloſed the moment thou haſt peruſed it.

LET-

LETTER XXVIII.

Mr. LOVELACE, *To* JOHN BELFORD, *Esq.*

Sunday Night—Monday Morning.

I WENT down with Revenge in my *heart*, the contents of Miss Howe's Letter almost engrossing me, the moment that Miss Harlowe and Mrs Moore (accompanied by Miss Rawlins) came in: But in my countenance all the gentle, the placid, the serene, that the glass could teach; and in my behaviour all the polite, that such an *unpolite* creature, as she has often told me I am, could put on.

Miss Rawlins was sent for home almost as soon as she came in, to entertain an unexpected visitor; to her great regret, as well as to the disappointment of my Fair-one, as I could perceive from the looks of both: For they had agreed, it seems, if I went to town, as I said I intended to do, to take a walk upon the Heath, at least in Mrs. Moore's garden; and who knows, what might have been the issue, had the spirit of curiosity in the one met with the spirit of communication in the other?

Miss Rawlins promised to return, if possible: But sent to excuse herself: her visitor intending to stay with her all night.

I rejoiced in my heart, at her message; and, after much supplication, obtained the favour of my Beloved's company for another walk in the garden, having, as I told her, abundance of things to say, to propose, and to be informed of, in order ultimately to govern myself in my future steps.

She had vouchsafed, I should have told thee, with eyes turned from me, and in an *half-aside* attitude, to sip two dishes of tea in my company—Dear soul! —How anger *unpolishes* the most polite! for I never saw Miss Harlowe behave so aukwardly. I imagined she knew not how to be aukward.

When

When we were in the garden, I poured my whole ſoul into her attentive ear; and beſought her returning favour.

She told me, that ſhe had formed her ſcheme for her future life: That, vile as the treatment was which ſhe had received from me, that was not all the reaſon ſhe had for rejecting my ſuit: But that, on the matureſt deliberation, ſhe was convinced, that ſhe could neither be happy with me, nor make me happy; and ſhe injoined me, for both our ſakes, to think no more of her.

The Captain, I told her, was rid down poſt in a manner, to forward my wiſhes with her uncle.—Lady Betty and Miſs Montague were undoubtedly arrived in town by this time. I would ſet out early in the morning to attend them. They adored her. They longed to ſee her. They *would* ſee her.—They would not be denied her company into Oxfordſhire. Whither could ſhe better go, to be free from her Brother's inſults?—Whither, to be abſolutely made unapprehenſive of any-body elſe?—Might I have any hopes of her returning favour, if Miſs Howe could be prevailed upon to intercede for me?

Miſs Howe prevailed upon to intercede for you! repeated ſhe, with a ſcornful bridle, but a very pretty one.—And there ſhe ſtopt.

I repeated the concern it would be to me to be under a neceſſity of mentioning the miſunderſtanding to Lady Betty and my Couſin, as a miſunderſtanding ſtill to be made up; and as if I were of very *little* conſequence to a dear creature who was of ſo *much* to me; urging, that theſe circumſtances would extremely lower me not only in my own opinion, but in that of my relations.

But ſtill ſhe referred to Miſs Howe's next Letter; and all the conceſſion I could bring her to in this whole conference, was, that ſhe would wait the arrival and viſit of the two Ladies, if they came in a

day

day or two, or before ſhe received the expected Letter from Miſs Howe.

Thank Heaven for this! thought I. And now may I go to town with hopes at my return to find thee, deareſt, where I ſhall leave thee.

But yet, as ſhe may find reaſons to change her mind in my abſence, I ſhall not entirely truſt to this. My fellow, therefore, who is in the houſe, and who, by Mrs. Bevis's kind intelligence, will know every ſtep ſhe can take, ſhall have Andrew and a horſe ready, to give me immediate notice of her motions; and moreover, go whither ſhe will, he ſhall be one of her retinue, tho' unknown to herſelf, if poſſible.

This was all I could make of the fair Inexorable. Should I be glad of it, or ſorry for it?—

Glad, I believe: And yet my pride is confoundedly abated to think, that I had ſo little hold in the affections of this daughter of the Harlowes.

Don't tell me, that Virtue and Principle are her guides on this occaſion!—'Tis *Pride*, a greater Pride than my own, that governs her. Love, ſhe has none, thou ſeeſt; nor ever had; at leaſt not in a ſuperior degree. Love that deſerves the name, never was under the dominion of *Prudence*, or of any *reaſoning* power. She cannot bear to be thought a *woman*, I warrant! And if, in the laſt attempt, I find her *not* one, what will ſhe be the worſe for the trial?—No one is to blame for ſuffering an evil he cannot ſhun or avoid.

Were a general to be overpowered, and robbed by a highwayman, would he be leſs fit for the command of an army on that account?—If indeed the general, pretending great valour, and having boaſted, that he never would be robbed, were to make but faint reſiſtance when he was brought to the teſt, and to yield his purſe when he was maſter of his own ſword, then indeed will the highwayman who robs him be thought the braver man.

But from these last conferences am I furnished with one argument in defence of my favourite purpose, which I never yet pleaded.

O Jack! what a difficulty must a man be allowed to have, to conquer a predominant passion, be it what it will, when the gratifying of it is in his *power*, however wrong he knows it to be to resolve to gratify it! Reflect upon this; and then wilt thou be able to account for, if not to excuse, a projected crime, which has *habit* to plead for it, in a breast as stormy as uncontroulable!

This that follows is my new argument——

Should she fail in the trial; should I succeed; and should she refuse to go on with me; and even resolve not to marry me (of which I can have no notion); and should she disdain to be obliged to me for the handsome provision I should be proud to make for her, even to the *half of my Estate*; yet cannot she be altogether unhappy—Is she not entitled to an independent fortune? Will not Col. Morden, as her Trustee, put her in possession of it? And did she not in our former conference point out the *way of life*, that she always preferred to the *married life*—to wit, "To take her "good Norton for her directress and guide, and to "live upon her own Estate in the manner her Grand-"father desired she should live (*a*)?"

It is moreover to be considered that she cannot, according to her own notions, recover above *one half* of her fame, were we now to intermarry; so much does she think she has suffered by her going off with me. And will she not be always repining and mourning for the loss of the *other half*?—And if she must live a life of such uneasiness and regret for *half*, may she not as well repine and mourn for the *whole*?

Nor, let me tell thee, will her own scheme of penitence, in this case, be half so perfect, if she do *not* fall, as if she *does*: For what a foolish penitent will

(*a*) See p. 228.

she

ſhe make, who has nothing to repent of! — She piques herſelf, thou knoweſt, and makes it matter of reproach to me, that ſhe went not off with me by her own conſent; but was tricked out of herſelf.

Nor upbraid thou me upon the meditated breach of vows ſo repeatedly made. She will not, thou ſeeſt, *permit* me to fulfil them. And if ſhe *would*, this I have to ſay, that at the time I made the moſt ſolemn of them, I was fully determined to keep them. But what Prince thinks himſelf obliged any longer to obſerve the articles of treaties the moſt ſacredly ſworn-to, than ſuits with his intereſt or inclination; altho' the conſequence of the infraction muſt be, as he knows, the deſtruction of thouſands.

Is not this then the reſult of all, that Miſs Clariſſa Harlowe, if it be not her own fault, may be as virtuous *after* ſhe has loſt her honour, as it is called, as ſhe was *before?* She may be a more eminent example to her Sex; and if ſhe yield (a *little* yield) in the trial, may be a *completer penitent*. Nor can ſhe, but by her own wilfulneſs, be reduced to *low fortunes*.

And thus may her *old* nurſe and ſhe; an *old* coachman; and a pair of *old* coach-horſes; and two or three *old* maid-ſervants, and perhaps a *very old* footman or two (for every-thing will be old and penitential about her) live very comfortably together; reading *old* ſermons, and *old* prayer-books; and relieving *old* men and *old* women; and giving *old* leſſons, and *old* warnings, upon new ſubjects, as well as *old* ones, to the young Ladies of her neighbourhood; and ſo paſs on to a good *old* age, doing a great deal of good both by precept and example in her generation.

And is a woman who can live thus prettily without *controul*; who ever did prefer, and who *ſtill* prefers, the *Single* to the *Married life*; and who will be enabled to do every-thing, that the plan ſhe had formed will direct her to do; to be ſaid to be ruined, undone, and ſuch ſort of ſtuff?—I have no patience

with the pretty fools, who uſe thoſe ſtrong words, to deſcribe a tranſitory evil; an evil which a mere church-form makes none?

At this rate of romancing, how many *flouriſhing Ruins* doſt thou, as well as I, know? Let us but look about us, and we ſhall ſee ſome of the haughtieſt and moſt *cenſorious* ſpirits among our acquaintance of that Sex, now paſſing for chaſte wives, of whom ſtrange ſtories might be told; and others, whoſe huſbands hearts have been made to ache for their gaieties, both before and after marriage; and yet know not half ſo much of them, as ſome of us honeſt fellows could tell them.

But, having thus ſatisfied myſelf in relation to the worſt that can happen to this *charming creature*; and that it will be her own fault, if ſhe be unhappy; I have not at all reflected upon what is likely to be *my own lot*.

This has always been my notion, tho' Miſs Howe grudges us Rakes the beſt of the Sex, and ſays, that the worſt is too good for us (*a*); That the wife of a Libertine ought to be pure, ſpotleſs, uncontaminated. To what purpoſe has ſuch a one lived a free life, but to know the world, and to make his advantages of it! —And, to be *very* ſerious, it would be a misfortune to the public for two perſons, heads of a family, to be both bad; ſince, between two ſuch, a race of varlets might be propagated (Lovelaces and Belfords, if thou wilt) who might do great miſchief in the world.

Thou ſeeſt at bottom that I am not an abandoned fellow; and that there is a mixture of gravity in me. This, as I grow older, may increaſe; and when my active capacity begins to abate, I may ſit down with the Preacher, and reſolve all my paſt life into vanity and vexation of ſpirit.

This is certain, that I ſhall never find a woman ſo

(*a*) See p. 44.

well

well ſuited to my taſte, as Miſs Clariſſa Harlowe. I only wiſh that I may have ſuch a Lady as her to comfort and adorn my ſetting Sun. I have often thought it very unhappy for us both, that ſo excellent a creature ſprang up a little too late for my *ſetting out*, and a little too early in my *progreſs*, before I can think of *returning*. And yet, as I have picked up the ſweet traveller in my way, I cannot help wiſhing, that ſhe would bear me company in the *reſt* of my journey, altho' ſhe were ſtepping out of her own path to oblige me. And then, perhaps, we could put up in the *evening* at the ſame *Inn*; and be very happy in each other's converſation; recounting the difficulties and dangers we had paſſed in our way to it.

I imagine, that thou wilt be apt to ſuſpect, that ſome paſſages in this Letter were written in town. Why, Jack, I cannct but ſay, that the Weſtminſter Air is a little groſſer than that at Hamſtead; and the converſation of Mrs. Sinclair, and the Nymphs, leſs innocent than Mrs. Moore's and Miſs Rawlins's. And I think in my heart, than I can ſay and write thoſe things at one place, which I cannot at the other; nor indeed any-where elſe.

I came to town about Seven this morning—All neceſſary directions and precautions remembered to be given.

I beſought the favour of an audience before I ſet out. I was deſirous to ſee which of her lovely faces ſhe was pleaſed to put on, after another night had paſſed. But ſhe was reſolved, I found, to leave our quarrel open. She would not give me an opportunity ſo much as to entreat her again to cloſe it, before the arrival of Lady Betty and my Couſin.

I had notice from my Proctor, by a few lines brought by a man and horſe, juſt before I ſet out, that all difficulties had been for two days paſt ſurmounted; and that I might have the Licence for fetching.

I ſent up the Letter to my Beloved, by Mrs. Bevis, with a repeated requeſt for admittance to her preſence upon it: But neither did this ſtand me inſtead. I ſuppoſe ſhe thought it would be allowing of the conſequences that were naturally to be expected to follow the obtaining of this inſtrument, if ſhe had conſented to ſee me on the contents of this Letter, having refuſed me that honour before I ſent it up to her.—No ſurpriſing her.—No advantage to be taken of her inattention to the niceſt circumſtances.

And now, Belford, I ſet out upon buſineſs.

LETTER XXIX.

Mr. Lovelace, *To* John Belford, *Eſq.*

Monday, June 12.

DIDST ever ſee a Licence, Jack?

Edmund, by divine permiſſion, Lord Biſhop of London, To our well-beloved in Chriſt, Robert Lovelace [Your ſervant, my good Lord! What have I done to merit ſo much goodneſs, who never ſaw your Lordſhip in my life?] *of the pariſh of St. Martin's in the Fields, Bachelor, and Clariſſa Harlowe, of the ſame pariſh Spinſter, ſendeth greeting.—WHEREAS ye are, as is alledged, determined to enter into the holy State of Matrimony* [This is only alledged, thou obſerveſt] *by and with the conſent of, &c. &c. &c. and are very deſirous of obtaining your Marriage to be ſolemnized in the face of the Church: We are willing that ſuch your honeſt deſires* [Honeſt deſires, Jack!] *may more ſpeedily have their due effect: And therefore, that ye may be able to procure ſuch Marriage to be freely and lawfully ſolemnized in the pariſh church of St. Martin in the Fields, or St. Giles's in the Fields in the County of Middleſex, by the Rector, Vicar, or Curate thereof, at any time of the year* [At ANY time of the year, Jack!] *without publication*

of bans: Provided, that by reaſon of any precontract [I verily think that I have had three or four precontracts in my time; but the good girls have not claimed upon them of a long while] *conſanguinity, affinity, or any other lawful cauſe whatſoever, there be no lawful impediment in this behalf; and that there be not at this time any action, ſuit, plaint, quarrel, or demand, moved or depending before any judge eccleſiaſtical or temporal, for or concerning any Marriage contracted by or with either of you; and that the ſaid Marriage be openly ſolemnized in the Church above-mentioned, between the hours of eight and twelve in the forenoon; and without prejudice to the Miniſter of the place where the ſaid woman is a pariſhioner: We do hereby, for good cauſes* [It coſt me—Let me ſee, Jack—What did it coſt me?] *give and grant our Licence, or faculty, as well to you the parties contracting, as to the Rector, Vicar, or Curate of the ſaid Church, where the ſaid Marriage is intended to be ſolemnized, to ſolemnize the ſame, in manner and form above-ſpecified, according to the rites and ceremonies preſcribed in the Book of Common-prayer in that behalf publiſhed by authority of Parliament. Provided always, That if hereafter any fraud ſhall appear to have been committed, at the time of granting this Licence, either by falſe ſuggeſtions, or concealment of the truth* [Now this, Belford, is a little hard upon us: For I cannot ſay, that every one of our ſuggeſtions is literally true:—So, in good conſcience, I ought not to marry under this Licence] *the Licence ſhall be void to all intents and purpoſes, as if the ſame had not been granted. And in that caſe, we do inhibit all Miniſters whatſoever, if any-thing of the premiſes ſhall come to their knowledge, from proceeding to the celebration of the ſaid Marriage, without firſt conſulting Us, or our vicar general.* Given, &c.

Then follow the Regiſter's name, and a large pendent ſeal, with theſe words round it—SEAL OF THE

VICAR-GENERAL AND OFFICIAL PRINCIPAL OF THE DIOCESE OF LONDON.

A good whimsical instrument, take it altogether! But what, thinkest thou, are the arms to this matrimonial Harbinger?—Why, in the first place, *Two crossed Swords*; to shew that Marriage is a state of offence as well as defence; *Three Lions*, to denote, that those who enter into the State, ought to have a triple proportion of courage. And [Couldst thou have imagined that these priestly fellows, in so solemn a case, would cut their jokes upon poor souls who came to have their *honest desires* put in a way to be gratified;] there are *three crooked horns*, smartly top-knotted with ribbands; which being the Ladies wear, seem to indicate that they may very probably adorn, as well as bestow, the Bull's feather.

To describe it according to Heraldry art, if I am not mistaken—Gules, two Swords, saltire-wise, Or; second coat, a chevron sable between three bugle-horns, OR [*So it ought to be*]: On a chief of the second, three Lions rampant of the first—But the devil take them for their hieroglyphics, should I say, if I were determined in good earnest to marry!

And determined to marry I would be, were it not for this consideration, That once married, and I am married for life.

That's the plague of it!—Could a man do as the Bird's do, change every Valentine's day [A *natural* appointment! for Birds have not the *sense*, forsooth, to fetter themselves, as we wiseacre men take great and solemn pains to do] there would be nothing at all in it. And what a glorious time would the *Lawyers* have, on the one hand, with their *Noverint Universi's*, and suits commenceable on restitution of goods and chattels; and the *Parsons*, on the other, with their indulgencies [renewable annually, as *other* Licences] to the *honest desires* of their clients?

Then, were a stated mulct, according to Rank or Fortune,

Fortune to be paid on every Change, towards the Exigencies of the State [But none on *Renewals* with the *old Lives*, for the ſake of encouraging conſtancy, eſpecially among the *minores*] the Change would be made ſufficiently difficult, and the whole Public would be the better for it; while thoſe Children, which the Parents could not agree about maintaining, might be conſidered as the *Children of the Public*, and provided for like the Children of the antient Spartans; who were (as ours would in this caſe be) a nation of heroes. How, Jack, could I have improved upon Lycurgus's Inſtitutions had I been a Lawgiver?

Did I never ſhew thee a Scheme, which I drew up on ſuch a notion as this?—In which I demonſtrated the *conveniencies*, and obviated the *inconveniencies*, of changing the preſent mode to this? I believe I never did.

I remember I proved, to a demonſtration, that ſuch a Change would be a means of annihilating, abſolutely annihilating, four or five very atrocious and capital ſins.—*Rapes*, vulgarly ſo called; Adultery, and Fornication; nor would *Polygamy* be panted after. Frequently would it prevent *Murders* and *Duelling*: Hardly any ſuch thing as *Jealouſy* (the cauſe of ſhocking violences) would be heard of: And Hypocriſy between man and wife be baniſhed the boſoms of each. Nor, probably, would the reproach of *Barrenneſs* reſt, as now it too often does, where is is leaſt deſerved.—Nor would there poſſibly be ſuch a perſon as a barren woman.

Moreover, what a multitude of domeſtic quarrels would be avoided, were ſuch a Scheme carried into execution? Since both Sexes would bear with each other, in the view that they could help themſelves in a few months.

And then what a charming ſubject for converſation would be the gallant and generous laſt partings between man and wife! Each, perhaps a new mate in

eye, and rejoicing ſecretly in the manumiſſion, could afford to be complaiſantly ſorrowful in appearance. "He preſented *her* with this Jewel, it will be ſaid by "the reporter, for *Example* ſake: She *him* with "that: How *he* wept! How *ſhe* ſobb'd! How they "looked after one another!" Yet, that's the jeſt of it, neither of them wiſhing to ſtand another twelve-month's trial.

And if giddy fellows, or giddy girls, miſbehave in a firſt Marriage, whether from *noviceſhip*, having expected to find more in the matter than can be found; or from *perverſeneſs* on *her* part, or *poſitiveneſs* on *his*, each being miſtaken in the other [A mighty difference, Jack, in the ſame perſon, an *inmate*, or a *viſitor*]; what a fine opportunity will each have, by this Scheme, of recovering a loſt character, and of ſetting all right in the next adventure?

And, O Jack, with what joy, with what rapture, would the *changelings* (or *changeables*, if thou like that word better) number the weeks, the days, the hours, as the annual obligation approached to its deſirable period!

As for the Spleen or Vapours, no ſuch malady would be known or heard of. The Phyſical tribe would, indeed, be the ſufferers, and the only ſufferers; ſince freſh health and freſh ſpirits, the conſequences of ſweet blood and ſweet humours (the mind and body continually pleaſed with each other) would perpetually flow in; and the joys of *Expectation*, the higheſt of all our joys, would invigorate and keep all alive.

But, that no Body of men might ſuffer, the *Phyſicians*, I thought, might turn *Parſons*, as there would be a great demand for Parſons. Beſides, as they would be partakers in the general benefit, they muſt be ſorry fellows indeed, if they preferred Themſelves to the Public.

Every one would be married a dozen times, at leaſt.

leaſt. Both men and women would be careful of their characters and polite in their behaviour, as well as delicate in their *perſons*, and elegant in their *dreſs* [A great matter each of theſe, let me tell thee, to keep paſſion alive] either to induce a *Renewal* with the *old Love*, or to recommend themſelves to a *new*. While the News papers would be crouded with paragraphs; all the world their readers, as all the world would be concerned to ſee *who and who's together*—

"Yeſterday, for inſtance, entered into the Holy "State of Matrimony" [We ſhould all ſpeak reverently of matrimony then] "The Right Honourable "Robert Earl Lovelace" [I ſhall be an Earl by that time] "with her Grace the Dutcheſs Dowager of "Fifty-manors; his Lordſhip's one-and thirtieth "wife."—I ſhall then be contented, perhaps, to take up, as it is called, with a widow. But ſhe muſt not have had more than one huſband neither. Thou knoweſt, that I am nice in theſe particulars.

I know, Jack, that thou for thy part, wilt approve of my Scheme.

As Lord M. and I, between us, have three or four Boroughs at command, I think I will get into Parliament, in order to bring in a Bill for this good purpoſe.

Neither will the Houſe of Parliament, nor the Houſes of Convocation, have reaſon to object to it. And all the Courts, whether *ſpiritual* or *ſenſual*, *civil* or *uncivil*, will find their account it it, when paſſed into a Law.

By my ſoul, Jack, I ſhould be apprehenſive of a general inſurrection, and that incited by the Women, were ſuch a Bill to be thrown out.—For here is the Excellency of the Scheme: The Women will have equal reaſon with the Men to be pleaſed with it.

Doſt think, that *old prerogative Harlowe*, for example, muſt not, if ſuch a Law were in being, have pulled in his horns?—So excellent a wife as he has,

would never elſe have *renewed* with ſuch a gloomy tyrant: Who, as well as all other married tyrants, muſt have been upon good behaviour from year to year.

A termagant wife, if ſuch a Law were to paſs, would be a phœnix.

The *Churches* would be the only *market-places* for the fair Sex; and *Domeſtic Excellence* the capital recommendation.

Nor would there be an *Old Maid* in Great Britain, and all its territories. For what an odd ſoul muſt ſhe be, who could not have her *twelvemonth's trial?*

In ſhort, a total alteration for the better, in the *morals* and *way of life* in both Sexes, muſt, in a very few years, be the conſequence of ſuch a ſalutary Law.

Who would have expected ſuch a one from me! I wiſh the devil owe me not a ſpite for it.

Then would not the diſtinction be very pretty, Jack? as in Flowers;—Such a Gentleman, or ſuch a Lady, is an ANNUAL—Such a one a PERENNIAL.

One difficulty, however, as I remember, occured to me, upon the probability that a wife might be *enceinte*, as the Lawyers call it. But thus I obviated it.

That no man ſhould be allowed to marry another woman without his *then* wife's conſent, till ſhe were brought-to-bed, and he had defrayed all incident charges; and till it was agreed upon between them, whether the child ſhould be *his*, *hers*, or the *public's*. The women in this caſe, to have what I call the *coercive option*: For I would not have it in the man's power to be a dog neither.

And indeed, I gave the turn of the ſcale in every part of my Scheme in the women's favour: For dearly do I love the ſweet rogues.

How infinitely more preferable this my Scheme to the Polygamy one of the old Patriarchs; who had wives and concubines without number!—I believe

David

David and Solomon had their hundreds *at a time*. Had they not, Jack?

Let me add, That *Annual Parliaments*, and *Annual Marriages*, are the projects next my heart. How could I expatiate upon the Benefits that would arise from both!

LETTER XXX.

Mr. LOVELACE, *To* JOHN BELFORD, *Esq.*

WELL, but now my plots thicken; and my employment of writing to thee on this subject will soon come to a conclusion. For now, having got the Licence; and Mrs. Townsend with her Tars being to come to Hamstead next Wednesday or Thursday; and another Letter possibly or message from Miss Howe, to enquire how Miss Harlowe does, upon the Rustic's report of her ill health, and to express her wonder that she has not heard from her in answer to her's on her escape;—I must soon blow up the Lady, or be blown up myself. And so I am preparing, with Lady Betty and my Cousin Montague, to wait upon my Beloved with a coach-and-four, or a Sett; for Lady Betty will not stir out with a pair, for the world; tho' but for two or three miles. And this is a well known part of her character.

But as to the arms and crest upon the coach and trappings?

Dost thou not know, that a Blunt's must supply her, while her own is new lining and repairing? An opportunity she is willing to take now she is in Town. Nothing of this kind can be done to her mind in the Country. Liveries nearly Lady Betty's.

Thou hast seen Lady Betty Lawrance several times —Hast thou not, Belford?

No, never in my life.

But thou hast; and lain with her too; or fame does thee more credit than thou deservest—Why, Jack, knowest thou not Lady Betty's other name?

Other name!—Has ſhe two?

She has. And what thinkeſt thou of Lady Bab. Wallis?

O the devil!

Now thou haſt it. Lady Barbara, thou knoweſt, lifted up in circumſtances, and by pride, never appears or produces herſelf, but on occaſions ſpecial—To paſs to men of Quality or Price, for a Ducheſs, or Counteſs, at leaſt. She has always been admired for a grandeur in her air, that few women of Quality can come up to: And never was ſuppoſed to be other than what ſhe paſſed for; tho' often and often a paramour for Lords.

And who, thinkeſt thou, is my Couſin Montague?

Nay, how ſhould I know?

How indeed! Why, my little Johanetta Golding, a lively, yet modeſt-looking girl, is my Couſin Montague.

There, Belford, is an Aunt!—There's a Couſin! Both have wit at will. Both are accuſtomed to ape Quality. Both are genteely deſcended. Miſtreſſes of themſelves and well educated—Yet paſt pity.—True *Spartan* dames; aſhamed of nothing but *detection*—Always, therefore upon their guard againſt that. And in their own conceit, when aſſuming top parts, the very Quality they ape.

And how doſt think I dreſs them out?—I'll tell thee.

Lady Betty in a rich gold Tiſſue, adorned with Jewels of high price.

My Couſin Montague in a pale pink, ſtanding on end with ſilver flowers of her own working. Charlotte, as well as my Beloved is admirable at her needle. Not quite ſo richly jewel'd out as Lady Betty; but Ear-rings and Solitaire very valuable, and infinitely becoming.

Johanetta, thou knoweſt, has a good complexion, a fine neck, and ears remarkably fine—ſo has Charlotte. She is nearly of Charlotte's ſtature too.

Laces both, the richeſt that could be procured Thou canſt not imagine what a ſum the Loan of the Jewels coſt me; tho' but for three days.

This ſweet girl will half ruin me. But ſeeſt thou not by this time, that her reign is ſhort!—It muſt be ſo. And Mrs. Sinclair has already prepared every thing for her reception once more.

* * * * *

HERE come the Ladies—attended by Suſan Morriſon, a tenant-farmer's daughter, as Lady Betty's woman; with her hands before her, and thoroughly inſtructed.

How dreſs advantages women!—eſpecially thoſe who have naturally a genteel air and turn, and have had education.

Hadſt thou ſeen how they paraded it—Couſin, and Couſin, and Nephew, at every word; Lady Betty bridling and looking *haughtily-condeſcending*: Charlotte galanting her fan, and ſwimming over the floor without touching it.

How I long to ſee my Niece-elect! cries one—For they are told, that we are not married; and are pleaſed, that I have not put the ſlight upon them, that they had apprehended from me.

How I long to ſee my dear Couſin that is to be, the other!

Your La'ſhip, and your La'ſhip, and an aukward courteſy at every addreſs, prim Suſan Morriſon.

Top your parts, ye villains!—You know how nicely I diſtinguiſh. There will be no paſſion in *this caſe* to blind the judgment, and to help on meditated deluſion, as when you engage with Titled ſinners. My Charmer is as cool and as diſtinguiſhing, tho' not quite ſo learned in her own Sex, as I am. Your commonly aſſumed dignity won't do for me now. Airs of ſuperiority, as if *born* to rank.—But no overdo!—Doubting nothing. Let not your faces arraign your hearts.

Eaſy

Eaſy and unaffected!—Your very dreſſes will give you pride enough.

A little *graver*, Lady Betty.—More ſignificance, leſs bridling in your dignity.

That's the air! Charmingly hit——Again—— You have it.

Devil take you!—Leſs arrogance. You are got into airs of *young Quality*. Be leſs ſenſible of your new Condition. People born to dignity command reſpect without needing to require it.

Now for *your* part, Couſin Charlotte!—

Pretty well. But a little too frolicky that air—Yet have I prepared my Beloved to expect in you both, great vivacity and quality-freedom.

Curſe thoſe eyes!—Thoſe glancings will never do. A down-caſt baſhful turn, if you can command it—Look upon me. Suppoſe Me now to be my Beloved.

Devil take that Leer. Too *ſignificantly* arch!—Once I knew you the girl I would now have you to be.

Sprightly, but not confident, Couſin Charlotte!—Be ſure forget not to look down, or aſide, when looked at. When eyes meet eyes, be yours the retreating ones. Your face will bear examination.

O Lord! Lord! that ſo young a creature can ſo ſoon forget the innocent appearance ſhe firſt charmed by; and which I thought born with you all!—Five years to ruin what Twenty had been building up! How natural the latter leſſon! How difficult to regain the former!

A ſtranger, as I hope to be ſaved, to the principal Arts of your Sex!—Once more, what-a-devil has your heart to do in your eyes?

Have I not told you, that my Beloved is a great obſerver of the eyes? She once quoted upon me a text (*a*), which ſhewed me how ſhe came by her

(*a*) Ecclus. xxvi. *The whoredom of a woman may be known in her haughty looks and eye-lids. Watch over an impudent eye, and marvel not if it treſpaſs againſt thee.*

know-

knowledge—Dorcas's were found guilty of treaſon the firſt moment ſhe ſaw her.

Once more, ſuppoſe *me* to be my Charmer.—Now you are to encounter my *examining* eye, and my *doubting* heart—

That's my dear!

Study that Air in the pier-glaſs!—

Charming!—Perfectly right!

Your honours, now, devils!—

Pretty well, Couſin Charlotte, for a young country Lady!—Ill form yields to familiarity, you *may* courteſy low. You muſt not be ſuppoſed to have forgot your boarding-ſchool airs.

But too low, too low, Lady Betty, for your years and your quality. The common fault of your Sex will be your danger: Aiming to be young too long!—The devil's in you all, when you judge of yourſelves by your wiſhes, and by your vanity! Fifty, in that caſe, is never more than Fifteen.

Graceful eaſe, conſcious dignity, like that of my charmer, O how hard to hit!

Both together now—

Charming!—That's the Air, Lady Betty!—That's the Cue, Couſin Charlotte, ſuited to the character of each!—But, once more, be ſure to have a guard upon your Eyes.

Never fear, Nephew!—

Never fear, Couſin.

A dram of Barbados each—

And now we are gone—

LETTER XXXI.

Mr. LOVELACE, *To* JOHN BELFORD, *Eſq.*

At Mrs. Sinclair's, Monday Afternoon.

ALL's right, as heart can wiſh!—In ſpite of all objection—In ſpite of a reluctance next to faintings—In ſpite of all foreſight, vigilance, ſuſpicion—

once

once more is the Charmer of my ſoul in her old lodgings!

Now throbs away every pulſe! Now thump, thump, thumps my bounding heart for ſomething!

But I have not time for the particulars of our management.

My Beloved is now directing ſome of her cloaths to be packed up—Never more to enter this houſe! Nor ever more will ſhe, I dare ſay, when once again out of it!

Yet not ſo much as a condition of forgiveneſs!—The Harlowe-ſpirited Fair-one will not *deſerve* my mercy!—She will wait for Miſs Howe's next Letter; and then, if ſhe find a *difficulty in her new Schemes* [Thank her for nothing]—will—Will what?—Why even *then* will take time to conſider, whether I am to be forgiven, or for ever rejected. An indifference that revives in my heart the remembrance of a thouſand of the like nature.—And yet Lady Betty and Miſs Montague [*A man would be tempted to think, Jack, that they wiſh her to provoke my vengeance*] declare, that I ought to be ſatisfied with ſuch a proud ſuſpenſion?

They are entirely attached to her. Whatever ſhe ſays, *is*, *muſt be*, goſpel! They are guarantees for her return to Hamſtead this night. They are to go back with her. A ſupper beſpoken by Lady Betty at Mrs. Moore's. All the vacant apartments there, by my permiſſion (for I had engaged them for a month certain) to be filled with them and their attendants, for a week at leaſt, or till they can prevail upon the dear Perverſe, as they hope they ſhall, to reſtore me to her favour, and to accompany Lady Betty to Oxfordſhire.

The dear creature has thus far condeſcended—That ſhe will write to Miſs Howe, and acquaint her with the preſent ſituation of things.

If ſhe write, I ſhall ſee what ſhe writes. But I believe ſhe will have other employment ſoon.

Lady Betty is ſure, ſhe tells her, that ſhe ſhall prevail upon her to forgive me; tho' ſhe dares ſay, that I deſerve not forgiveneſs. Lady Betty is too delicate to enquire ſtrictly into the nature of my offence. But it muſt be an offence againſt *herſelf*, againſt *Miſs Montague*, againſt the *Virtuous of the whole Sex*, or it could not be ſo highly reſented. Yet ſhe will not leave her till ſhe forgive me, and till ſhe ſee our Nuptials privately celebrated. Mean time, as ſhe approves of her *Uncle's expedient*, ſhe will addreſs her as *already my wife before ſtrangers*.

Stedman her Solicitor may attend her for orders, in relation to her Chancery affair, at Hamſtead. Not one hour they *can* be favoured with, will they loſe from the company and converſation of ſo dear, ſo charming a new relation.

Hard then if ſhe had not obliged them with her company, in their coach-and-four, to and from their Couſin Leeſon's, who longed (as they themſelves had done) to ſee a Lady ſo juſtly celebrated.

'How will Lord M. be raptured when he ſees her,
'and can ſalute her as his Niece!

'How will Lady Sarah bleſs herſelf!—She will
'now think her loſs of the dear daughter ſhe mourns
'for, happily ſupplied!'

Miſs Montague dwells upon every word that falls from her lips. She perfectly adores her new Couſin:
'For her Couſin ſhe *muſt* be. And her Couſin will
'ſhe call her! She anſwers for equal admiration in
'her Siſter Patty.

'Ay, cry I (whiſpering loud enough for her to
'hear) how will my Couſin Patty's dove's eyes gliſten
'and run over, on the very firſt interview!—So gra-
'cious, ſo noble, ſo unaffected a dear creature!'

"What a happy family," chorus we all, "will
"ours be!"

Theſe and ſuch like congratulatory admirations every hour repeated: Her modeſty hurt by the ecſta-

tic

tic praiſes:—'Her graces are too natural to herſelf 'for her to be proud of them:—But ſhe muſt be 'content to be puniſhed for excellencies that caſt a 'ſhade upon the *moſt* excellent!"

In ſhort, we are here, as at Hamſtead, all joy and rapture: All of us except my Beloved; in whoſe ſweet face [her almoſt fainting reluctance to re-enter theſe doors not overcome] reigns a kind of anxious ſerenity!—But how will even that be changed in a few hours!

Methinks I begin to pity the half-apprehenſive Beauty!—But, avaunt, thou unſeaſonably intruding pity! Thou haſt more than once already well nigh undone me!—And, Adieu, Reflection! Begone, Conſideration! and Commiſeration! I diſmiſs ye all, for at leaſt a week to come!—Be remembered her broken word! Her flight, when my fond ſoul was meditating mercy to her!—Be remembered her treatment of me in her Letter on her eſcape to Hamſtead!—Her Hamſtead virulence! What is it ſhe ought not to expect from an unchained Beelzebub, and a plotting villain?

Be her preference of the Single Life to *me* alſo remembered!—That ſhe deſpiſes me!—That ſhe even refuſes to be my WIFE!—A proud Lovelace to be denied a *Wife!*—To be more proudly rejected by a Daughter of the *Harlowes!*—The Ladies of my own family [She *thinks* them the Ladies of my family] ſupplicating in vain for her returning favour to their deſpiſed kinſman, and taking Laws from her ſtill prouder punctilio!

Be the execrations of her vixen friend likewiſe remembered, poured out upon me from *her* repreſentations, and thereby made her *own* execrations!

Be remembered ſtill more particularly, the Townſend plot, ſet on foot between them, and now, in a day or two, ready to break out; and the *ſordid threatning* thrown out againſt me by that little fury!

Is

Is not *this* the criſis for which I have been long waiting? Shall Tomlinſon, ſhall theſe women, be engaged; ſhall ſo many engines be ſet a work, at an immenſe expence, with infinite contrivance; and all to no purpoſe?

Is not *this* the hour of her trial—And in *her*, of the trial of the virtue of her whole Sex, ſo long premeditated, ſo long threatened?—Whether her froſt be froſt indeed? Whether her virtue be principle? Whether, if *once ſubdued, ſhe will not be always ſubdued?* And will ſhe not want the very crown of her glory, the proof of her till now all-ſurpaſſing excellence, if I ſtop ſhort of the ultimate trial?

Now is the end of purpoſes long over-awed, often ſuſpended, at hand. And need I to throw the ſins of her curſed family into the too weighty ſcale?

[*Abhorred be force!—Be the thoughts of force! There's no triumph over the Will in force!* This I know I have ſaid (*a*). But would I not have avoided it, if I could?—Have I not tried every other method? And have I any other reſource left me? Can ſhe reſent the *laſt outrage* more than ſhe has reſented a *fainter effort?*—And if her reſentments run ever ſo high, cannot I repair by Matrimony?—She will not refuſe me, I know, Jack: the haughty Beauty will not refuſe me, when her pride of being corporally inviolate is brought down; when ſhe can tell no tales, but when (be her reſiſtance what it will) even her own Sex will ſuſpect a Yielding in Reſiſtance; and when that Modeſty, which may fill her boſom with reſentment, will lock up her ſpeech.

But how know I, that I have not made my own difficulties?—Is ſhe not a woman!—What redreſs lies for a perpetrated evil?—Muſt ſhe not *live?*—Her piety will ſecure her life.—And will not *time* be my friend!—What, in a word, will be her behaviour afterwards?—She cannot fly me!—She muſt

(*a*) Vol. IV. p. 223.

forgive

forgive me—And, as I have often ſaid, *once forgiven, will be for ever forgiven.*

Why then ſhould this enervating pity unſteel my fooliſh heart?

It ſhall not. All theſe things will I remember; and think of nothing elſe, in order to keep up a reſolution, which the women about me will have it I ſhall be ſtill unable to hold.

I'll teach the dear charming creature to emulate me in contrivance;—I'll teach her to weave webs and plots againſt her conqueror!—I'll ſhew her, that in her ſmuggling ſchemes ſhe is but a ſpider compared to me, and that ſhe has all this time been ſpinning only a Cobweb!

* * * * *

WHAT ſhall we do now! We are immerſed in the depth of grief and apprehenſion! How ill do women bear diſppointment!—Set upon going to Hamſtead, and upon quitting for ever a houſe ſhe re-entered with infinite reluctance; what things ſhe intended to take with her, ready packed up; herſelf on tip-toe to be gone; and I prepared to attend her thither; ſhe begins to be afraid, that ſhe ſhall not go this night; and in grief and deſpair has flung herſelf into her old apartment; locked herſelf in; and thro' the key-hole Dorcas ſees her on her knees—praying I ſuppoſe for a ſafe deliverance.

And from what?—And wherefore theſe agonizing apprehenſions?

Why, here, this unkind Lady Betty, *with* the dear creature's knowledge, tho' to her concern, and this mad-headed Couſin Montague *without* it, while ſhe was employ'd in directing her package, have hurried away in the coach to their own lodgings [Only, indeed, to put up ſome night cloaths, and ſo forth, in order to attend their ſweet Couſin to Hamſtead]; and, no leſs to my ſurprize than hers, are not yet returned.

I have

I have ſent to know the meaning of it.

In a great hurry of ſpirits, ſhe would have had me to go myſelf. Hardly any pacifying her!—The girl, God bleſs her! is wild with her own idle apprehenſions!—What is ſhe afraid of?

I curſe them both for their delay—My tardy villain, how he ſtays!—Devil fetch them! Let them ſend their coach, and we'll go without them. In her hearing I bid the fellow tell them ſo.—Perhaps he ſtays to bring the coach, if any thing happens to hinder the Ladies from attending my Beloved this night.

* * * * *

DEVIL take them, again ſay I!—They *promiſed* too they would not ſtay, becauſe it was but two nights ago, that a chariot was robbed at the foot of Hamſtead hill; which alarmed my Fair-one when told of it!

Oh! here's Lady Betty's ſervant, with a billet.

To ROBERT LOVELACE, *Eſq.*

Monday night.

EXcuſe us, dear Nephew, I beſeech you, to my deareſt Kinſwoman. One night cannot break ſquares. For here Miſs Montague has been taken violently ill with three fainting fits, one after another. The hurry of her joy, I believe, to find your dear Lady ſo much ſurpaſs all expectations [Never did Family love, you know, reign ſo ſtrong, as among us] and the too eager deſire ſhe had to attend her, have occaſioned it! For ſhe has but weak ſpirits, poor girl! well as ſhe looks.

If ſhe be better, we will certainly go with you tomorrow morning, after we have breakfaſted with *her*, at your lodgings. But, whether ſhe be, or not, I will do myſelf the pleaſure to attend your Lady to Hamſtead; and will be with you for that purpoſe

about

about nine in the morning. With due compliments to your moſt worthily beloved, I am

Yours affectionately,

ELIZAB. LAWRANCE.

Faith and troth, Jack, I know not what to do with myſelf: For here, juſt now having ſent in the above note by Dorcas, out came my Beloved with it in her hand: In a fit of phrenſy!—True, by my Soul!

She had indeed complained of *her head* all the evening.

Dorcas ran to me, out of breath, to tell me, that her Lady was coming in ſome ſtrange way: But ſhe followed her ſo quick, that the frighted wench had not time to ſay in what way.

It ſeems, when ſhe read the billet—Now indeed, ſaid ſhe, am I a loſt creature! O the poor Clariſſa Harlowe!

She tore off her head-cloaths: enquired where I was: And in ſhe came, her ſhining treſſes flowing about her neck; her ruffles torn, and hanging in tatters about her ſnowy hands; with her arms ſpread out; her eyes wildly turned, as if ſtarting from their orbits—Down ſunk ſhe at my feet, as ſoon as ſhe approached me; her charming boſom heaving to her uplifted face; and claſping her arms about my knees, Dear Lovelace, ſaid ſhe, if ever—if ever—if ever—And, unable to ſpeak another word, quitting her claſping hold, down proſtrate on the floor ſunk ſhe, neither in a Fit nor out of one.

I was quite aſtoniſhed.—All my purpoſes ſuſpended for a few moments, I knew neither what to ſay, nor what to do. But, recollecting myſelf, Am I *again*, thought I, in a way to be overcome, and made a fool of!—If I now recede, I am gone for ever.

I raiſed her; But down ſhe ſunk, as if quite diſjointed; her limbs failing her—yet not in a Fit neither.

ther. I never heard of or ſaw ſuch a dear unaccountable: Almoſt lifeleſs, and ſpeechleſs too for a few moments: What muſt her apprehenſions be at that moment? And for what?—An high-notioned dear ſoul!—Pretty ignorance!—thought I.

Never having met with ſo ſincere, ſo unqueſtionable a repugnance, I was ſtaggered—I was confounded—Yet how ſhould I know that it would be ſo till I tried?—And how, having proceeded thus far, could I ſtop, were I *not* to have had the women to goad me on, and to make light of circumſtances, which they pretended to be better judges of than I?

I lifted her, however, into a chair; and in words of diſordered paſſion, told her, All her fears were needleſs: Wondered at them: Begged of her to be pacified: Beſought her reliance on my faith and honour: And revowed all my old vows, and poured forth new ones.

At laſt, with an heart-breaking ſob, I ſee, I ſee, Mr. Lovelace, in broken ſentences ſhe ſpoke—I ſee, I ſee—that at laſt—at laſt—I am ruined!—Ruined, if *your* pity—Let me implore your pity!—And down on her boſom, like, a half-broken-ſtalked Lily top-heavy with the overcharging dews of the morning, ſunk her head, with a ſigh that went to my heart.

All I could think of to re-aſſure her, when a little recovered, I ſaid.

Why did I not ſend for their coach, as I had intimated? It might return in the morning for the Ladies.

I had actually done ſo, I told her, on ſeeing her ſtrange uneaſineſs. But it was then gone to fetch a doctor for Miſs Montague, leſt his chariot ſhould not be ſo ready.

Ah! Lovelace! ſaid ſhe, with a doubting face; anguiſh in her imploring eye.

Lady Betty would think it very ſtrange, I told her, if ſhe were to know it was ſo diſagreeable to her to

ſtay

ſtay one night for *her* company in the houſe where ſhe had paſſed *ſo many*.

She called me names upon this—She had called me names before.—I was patient.

Let her go to Lady Betty's lodgings then; *directly* go; if the perſon I called Lady Betty was really Lady Betty.

If, my dear? Good Heaven! What a villain does that IF ſhew you believe me to be!

I cannot help it—I beſeech you once more, Let me go to Mrs. Leeſon's, if *that* IF ought not to be ſaid.

Then aſſuming a more reſolute ſpirit—I will go! I will enquire my way!—I will go by myſelf!—And would have ruſhed by me.

I folded my arms about her to detain her; pleading the bad way I heard poor Charlotte was in; and what a farther concern her impatience, if ſhe went, would give to poor Charlotte.

She would believe nothing I ſaid, unleſs I would inſtantly order a coach (ſince ſhe was not to have Lady Betty's nor was permitted to go to Mrs. Leeſon's) and let her go in it to Hamſtead, late as it was, and all alone; ſo much the better: For in the houſe of *people* of whom Lady Betty, upon enquiry, had heard a bad character [*Dropt fooliſhly This, by my prating new relation, in order to do credit to herſelf, by depreciating others*]: every thing, and every face, looking with ſo much meaning vileneſs, as well as *my own* [*Thou art ſtill too ſenſible, thought I, my Charmer!*]; ſhe was reſolved not to ſtay another night.

Dreading what might happen as to her intellects, and being very apprehenſive, that ſhe might poſſibly go thro' a great deal before morning (tho' more violent ſhe could not well be with the worſt ſhe dreaded) I humoured her, and ordered Will. to endeavour to get

get a coach directly, to carry us to Hamſtead; I cared not at what price.

Robbers, with whom I would have terrified her, ſhe feared not—*I* was all her fear, I found; and this houſe her terror: For I ſaw plainly, that ſhe now believed, that Lady Betty and Miſs Montague were both impoſtors.

But her miſtruſt is a little of the lateſt to do her ſervice!

And, O Jack, the Rage of Love, the Rage of Revenge is upon me! By turns they tear me!—The progreſs already made—The womens inſtigations—The power I ſhall have to try her to the utmoſt, and ſtill to marry her, if ſhe be not to be brought to cohabitation—Let me periſh, Belford, if ſhe eſcape me now?

* * * *
* * *

WILL. is not yet come back. Near Eleven.

* * * *
* * *

WILL. is this moment returned.—No coach to be got, either *for love or money*.

Once more, ſhe urges—To Mrs. Leeſon's let me go, Lovelace! Good Lovelace, let me go to Mrs. Leeſon's? What is Miſs Montague's illneſs to my terror?—For the Almighty's ſake, Mr. Lovelace!—her hands claſped——

O my angel! What a wildneſs is this!—Do you know, do you ſee, my deareſt life, what appearance your cauſeleſs apprehenſions have given you?—Do you know it is paſt Eleven o'clock?

Twelve, One, Two, Three, Four—any hour—I care not—If you mean me honourably, let me go out of this hated houſe!

Thou'lt obſerve, Belford, that tho' this was written afterwards, yet (as in other places) I write it as it was ſpoken and happened, as if I had retired to put down every ſentence as ſpoken. I know thou likeſt this lively *preſent-tenſe* manner, as it is one of my peculiars.

Juſt as ſhe had repeated the laſt words, *If you mean*

me honourably, let me go out of this hated houſe, in came Mrs. Sinclair, in a great ferment—And what, pray, Madam, has *this houſe* done to you?—Mr. Lovelace, you have known me ſome time; and, if I have not the niceneſs of this Lady, I hope I do not deſerve to be treated thus!

She ſet her huge arms akembo: *Hoh!* Madam, let me tell you, I am amazed at your freedoms with my character! And, Mr. Lovelace [holding up, and violently ſhaking her head] if you are a gentleman, and a man of honour——

Having never before ſeen any thing but obſequiouſneſs in this woman, little as ſhe liked her, ſhe was frighted at her maſculine air, and fierce look—God help me! cried ſhe—What will become of me now! Then, turning her head hither and thither, in a wild kind of amaze, Whom have I for a protector! What will become of mé now!

I will be your protector, my deareſt Love!—But indeed you are uncharitably ſevere upon poor Mrs. Sinclair! Indeed you are!—She is a gentlewoman born, and the relict of man of honour; and tho' left in ſuch circumſtances as to oblige her to let lodgings, yet would ſhe ſcorn to be guilty of a willful baſeneſs.

I hope ſo—It may be ſo—I may be miſtaken—But—But there is no crime, I preſume, no treaſon, to ſay I don't like her houſe.

The old dragon ſtraddled up to her, with her arms kemboed again—Her eye-brows erect, like the briſtles upon a hog's back, and, ſcouling over her ſhortened noſe, more than half-hid her ferret eyes. Her mouth was diſtorted. She pouted out her blubber-lips, as if to bellows up wind and ſputter into her horſe-noſtrils; and her chin was curdled, and more than uſually prominent with paſſion.

With two *Hoh-Madams* ſhe accoſted the frighted Fair-one; who, terrified, caught hold of my ſleeve.

I feared ſhe would fall into fits; and, with a look of indig-

indgnation, told Mrs. Sinclair, that these apartments were mine; and I could not imagine what she meant, either by listening to what passed between me and my spouse, or to come in uninvited; and still more I wondered at her giving herself these strange liberties.

I may be to blame, Jack, for suffering this wretch to give herself these airs; but her coming in was without my orders.

The old Beldam, throwing herself into a chair, fell a blubbering and exclaiming. And the pacifying of her, and endeavouring to reconcile the Lady to her, took up till near One a clock.

And thus, between terror, and the late hour, and what followed, she was diverted from the thoughts of getting out of the house to Mrs. Leeson's, or anywhere else.

LETTER XXXII.

Mr. LOVELACE, *To* JOHN BELFORD, *Esq.*

Tuesday Morn, June 13.

AND now, Belford, I can go no farther. The affair is over. Clarissa lives. And I am

Your humble Servant,

R. LOVELACE.

The whole of this black transaction is given by the injured Lady to Miss Howe, in her subsequent Letters, dated Thursday, July 6. *See* Vol. VI. Letters, xliv. xlv. xlvi.

LETTER XXXIII.

Mr. BELFORD, *To* ROBERT LOVELACE, *Esq.*

Watford, Wedn. June 14.

O Thou savage-hearted monster! What work hast thou made in *one guilty hour*, for a *whole age* of repentance!

I am inexpreſſibly concerned at the fate of this matchleſs Lady! She could not have fallen into the hands of any other man breathing, and ſuffered as ſhe has done with thee.

I had written a great part of another long Letter to try to ſoften thy flinty heart in her favour; for I thought it but too likely, that thou ſhouldſt ſucceed in getting her back again to the accurſed woman's. But I find it would have been too late, had I finiſhed it, and ſent it away. Yet cannot I forbear writing, to urge thee to make the *only* amends thou now canſt make her, by a proper uſe of the Licenſe thou haſt obtained.

Poor, poor Lady! It is a pain to me, that I ever ſaw her. Such an adorer of virtue to be ſacrificed to the vileſt of her Sex; and Thou their implement in the devil's hand, for a purpoſe ſo baſe, ſo ungenerous, ſo inhumane!—Pride thyſelf, O cruelleſt of men! in this reflection; and that thy triumph over a woman, who for thy ſake was abandoned of every friend ſhe had the world, was effected; not by advantages taken of her weakneſs and credulity; but by the blackeſt artifice; after a long courſe of ſtudied deceits had been tried to no purpoſe.

I can tell thee, it is well either for thee or for me, that I am not the Brother of the Lady. Had I been her Brother, her violation muſt have been followed by the blood of one of us.

Excuſe me, Lovelace; and let not the Lady fare the worſe for my concern for her. And yet I have but one *other* motive to aſk thy excuſe; and that is, becauſe I owe to thy own communicative pen the knowledge I have of thy barbarous villainy, ſince thou mighteſt, if thou wouldſt, have paſſed it upon me for a common ſeduction.

CLARISSA LIVES, thou ſayeſt. That ſhe does, is my wonder: and theſe words ſhew, that thou thyſelf (tho' thou couldſt, nevertheleſs, proceed) hardly ex-

pectedſt

pectedſt ſhe would have ſurvived the outrage. What muſt have been the poor Lady's diſtreſs (watchful as ſhe had been over her honour) when dreadful Certainty took place of cruel apprehenſion!—And yet a man may gueſs what it muſt have been, by that which thou painteſt, when ſhe ſuſpected herſelf tricked, deſerted, and betrayed, by the pretended Ladies.

That thou couldſt behold her phrenſy on this occaſion, and her half-ſpeechleſs, half-fainting proſtration at thy feet, and yet retain thy evil purpoſes will hardly be thought credible, even by thoſe who know *thee*, if they have ſeen *her*.

Poor, poor Lady! With ſuch noble qualities as would have adorned the moſt exalted married life, to fall into the hands of the *only* man in the world, who could have treated her as thou haſt treated her!—And to let looſe the old dragon, as thou properly calleſt her, upon the before-affrighted innocent, what a barbarity was *that!* What a *poor* piece of barbarity! in order to obtain by Terror, what thou deſpairedſt to gain by Love, tho' ſupported by ſtratagems the moſt inſidious!

O LOVELACE! LOVELACE! *had I doubted it before, I ſhould now be convinced, that there muſt be a* WORLD AFTER THIS, *to do juſtice to injured merit, and to puniſh barbarous perfidy!* Could the divine SOCRATES, and the divine CLARISSA, otherwiſe have ſuffered?

But let me, if poſſible, for one moment, try to forget this villainous outrage on the moſt excellent of women.

I have buſineſs here, which will hold me yet a few days; and then perhaps I ſhall quit this houſe for ever.

I have had a ſolemn and tedious time of it. I ſhould never have known, that I had half the reſpect I really find I had for the old gentleman, had I not ſo cloſely, at his earneſt deſire, attended him, and been a witneſs of the tortures he underwent.

This melancholy occaſion may poſſibly have contributed to humanize me: But ſurely I never could have been ſo remorſeleſs a caitiff as *thou* haſt been, to a woman of *half* this Lady's excellence.

But pry'thee, dear Lovelace, if thou'rt a man, and not a devil, reſolve, out of hand, to repair thy ſin of ingratitude, by conferring upon thyſelf the higheſt honour thou *canſt* receive, in making her lawfully thine.

But if thou canſt not prevail upon thyſelf to do her this juſtice, I think I ſhould not ſcruple a tilt with thee [An everlaſting rupture *at leaſt* muſt follow] if thou ſacrificeſt her to the accurſed women.

Thou art deſirous to know what advantage I reap by my Uncle's demiſe. I do not certainly know; for I have not been ſo greedily ſolicitous on this ſubject, as ſome of the kindred have been, who ought to have ſhewn more decency, as I have told them, and ſuffered the corpſe to have been cold before they had begun their hungry enquiries. But, by what I gathered from the poor man's talk to me, who oftener than I wiſhed touched upon the ſubject, I deem it will be upwards of 5000*l.* in caſh, and in the funds, after all Legacies paid, beſides the real eſtate, which is a clear 1000*l.* a year.

I wiſh from my heart, thou wert a Money-lover! Were the Eſtate to be of double the value, thou ſhouldſt have it every ſhilling; only upon one condition [for my circumſtances before were as eaſy as I wiſh them to be while I am ſingle]—That thou wouldſt permit me the honour of being this fatherleſs Lady's *Father*, as it is called, at the altar.

Think of this! my dear Lovelace: Be honeſt: And let me preſent thee with the brighteſt jewel that man ever poſſeſſed; and then, body and ſoul, wilt thou bind to thee for ever, thy

BELFORD.

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LETTER XXXIV.

Mr. LOVELACE, *To* JOHN BELFORD, *Esq.*

Thursday, June 15.

LET me alone, you great dog, you!—Let me alone!—have I heard a lesser boy, his coward arms held over his head and face, say to a bigger, who was pommeling him, for having run away with his apple, his orange, or his ginger-bread.

So say I to thee, on occasion of thy severity to thy poor friend, who, as thou owneſt, has furnished thee (ungenerous as thou art!) with the weapons thou brandisheſt so fearfully against him.—And to what purpose, when the mischief is done? when, of consequence, the affair is irretrievable? and when a CLARISSA could not move me?

Well, but, after all, I must own, that there is something very singular in this Lady's case: And, at times, I cannot help regretting, that I ever attempted her; since not *one power either of Body or Soul* could be moved in my favour; and since, to use the expression of the philosopher, on a much graver occasion, There is no difference to be found between the skull of king Philip, and that of another man.

But people'e extravagant notions of things alter not facts, Belford: And, when all's done, Miss Clarissa Harlowe has but run the fate of a thousand others of her Sex—Only that they did not set such a romantic value upon what they call their *Honour*; that's all.

And yet I will allow thee this—That if a person sets a high value opon any-thing, be it ever such a trifle in itself, or in the eye of others, the robbing of that person of it is *not* a trifle to *him*. Take the matter in this light, I own I have done wrong, great wrong, to this admirable creature.

But have I not known twenty and twenty of the Sex, who have seemed to carry their notions of virtue

high; yet, when brought to the teſt, have abated of their ſeverity? And how ſhould we be convinced that *any* of them are proof, till they are tried?

A thouſand times have I ſaid, that I never yet met with ſuch a woman as this. If I *had*, I hardly ever ſhould have attempted Miſs Clariſſa Harlowe. Hitherto ſhe is all angel: And was not that the point which at ſetting out I propoſed to try (*a*)? And was not *Cohabitation* ever my darling view? And am I not now, at laſt, in the high road to it?—It is true, that I have nothing to boaſt of as to her Will. *The very contrary.* But now are we come to the Teſt, whether ſhe cannot be brought to make the beſt of an irreparable evil—If ſhe exclaim [She has reaſon to exclaim, and I will ſit down with patience by the hour together to hear her exclamations, till ſhe is tired of them] ſhe will then deſcend to expoſtulation perhaps: Expoſtulation will give me hope: Expoſtulation will ſhew, that ſhe hates me not. And if ſhe hate me not, ſhe will forgive: And if ſhe *now* forgive; then will all be over; and ſhe will be mine upon my own terms: And it ſhall then be the whole ſtudy of my future life to make her happy.

So, Belford, thou ſeeſt, that I have journeyed on to this ſtage [indeed, thro' infinite mazes, and as infinite remorſes] with one determined point in view, from the firſt. To thy urgent ſupplication then, that I will do her grateful juſtice by marriage, let me anſwer in Matt. Prior's two lines on his hoped-for Auditorſhip; as put into the mouths of his St. John and Harley;

——*Let that be done, which Matt. doth ſay.*
YEA, *quoth the Earl*—BUT NOT TO DAY.

Thou ſeeſt, Jack, that I make no reſolutions, however, againſt doing her, one time or other, the wiſhed-for juſtice, even were I to ſucceed in my principal view,

(*a*) See Vol. III. p. 8;

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Cohabitation. And of this I do aſſure thee, that, if I ever marry, it muſt, it ſhall be Miſs Clariſſa Harlowe. —Nor is her honour at all impaired with *me*, by what ſhe has *ſo far* ſuffered: But the contrary. She muſt only take care, that, if ſhe be at laſt brought to forgive me, ſhe ſhew me, that her Lovelace is the only man on earth, whom ſhe could have forgiven me on the like occaſion.

But, ah, Jack! what, in the mean time, ſhall I do with this admirable creature? At preſent—[I am loth to ſay it—But, at preſent] ſhe is quite ſtupefied.

I had rather, methinks, ſhe ſhould have retained all her active powers, tho' I had ſuffered by her nails and her teeth, than that ſhe ſhould be ſunk into ſuch a ſtate of abſolute—inſenſibility (ſhall I call it?) as ſhe has been in ever ſince Tueſday morning. Yet, as ſhe begins a little to revive, and now-and-then to call names, and to exclaim, I dread almoſt to engage with the anguiſh of a ſpirit that owes its extraordinary agitations to a niceneſs that has no example either in antient or modern Story. For, after all, what is there in her caſe, that ſhould *ſtupefy* ſuch a glowing, ſuch a *blooming* charmer?—Exceſs of grief, exceſs of terror, has made a perſon's hair ſtand on end, and even (as we have read) changed the colour of it. But that it ſhould ſo ſtupefy, as to make a perſon, at times, inſenſible to thoſe imaginary wrongs, which would raiſe others *from* ſtupefaction, is very ſurpriſing!

But I will leave this ſubject, leſt it ſhould make me too grave.

I was yeſterday at Hamſtead, and diſcharged all obligations there, with no ſmall applauſe. I told them, that the Lady was now as happy as myſelf: And that is no great untruth; for I am not altogether ſo, when I allow myſelf to *think*.

Mrs. Townſend, with her Tars, had not been then there. I told them what I would have them ſay to her, if ſhe came.

Well, but, after all [How many *after-all's* have I?] I could be very grave, were I to give way to it. —The devil take me for a fool! What's the matter with me, I wonder!—I muſt breathe a freſher air for a few days.

But what ſhall I do with this admirable creature the while?—Hang me, if I know!—For, if I ſtir, the venomous Spider of this habitation will want to ſet upon the charming Fly, whoſe ſilken wings are already ſo entangled in my enormous web, that ſhe cannot move hand or foot: For ſo much has grief ſtupefied her, that ſhe is at preſent as deſtitute of will, as ſhe always ſeemed to be of deſire. I muſt not therefore think of leaving her yet for two days together.

LETTER XXXV.

Mr. LOVELACE, *To* JOHN BELFORD, *Eſq.*

I Have juſt now had a ſpecimen of what the reſentment of this dear creature will be when quite recovered: An affecting one!—For entering an apartment after Dorcas; and endeavouring to ſooth and pacify her diſordered mind; in the midſt of my blandiſhments, ſhe held up to Heaven, in a ſpeechleſs agony, the innocent Licence (which ſhe has in her own power); as the poor diſtreſſed Catalans held up their Engliſh treaty, on an occaſion that keeps the worſt of my actions in countenance.

She ſeemed about to call down vengeance upon me; when, happily, the Leaden God, in pity to her trembling Lovelace, waved over her half-drowned eyes his ſomniferous wand, and laid aſleep the fair Exclaimer, before ſhe could go half thro' with her intended imprecation.

Thou wilt gueſs, by what I have written, that ſome *little* Art has been made uſe of: But it was with a *generous* deſign (if thou'lt allow me the word on ſuch an occaſion) in order to leſſen the too quick ſenſe ſhe was

likely

likely to have of what ſhe was to ſuffer. A contrivance I never had occaſion for before, and had not thought of now, if Mrs. Sinclair had not propoſed it to me: To whom I left the management of it: And I have done nothing but curſe her ever ſince, leſt the quantity ſhould have for ever damped her charming intellects.

Hence my concern—For I think the poor Lady ought not to have been ſo treated. *Poor Lady*, did I ſay?—What have I to do with thy creeping ſtyle?—But have not I the worſt of it; ſince her inſenſibility has made me but a thief to my own joys?

I did not intend to tell thee of this little *innocent* trick; for ſuch I deſigned it to be; but that I hate diſingenuouſneſs: To thee, eſpecially: And as I cannot help writing in a more ſerious vein than uſual, thou wouldſt perhaps, had I not hinted the true cauſe, have imagined that I was ſorry for the fact itſelf: And this would have given *thee* a good deal of trouble in ſcribbling dull perſuaſives to repair by Matrimony; and *me* in reading thy crude nonſenſe. Beſides, one day or other, thou mighteſt, had I not confeſſed it, have heard of it in an aggravated manner; and I know thou haſt ſuch an high opinion of this Lady's virtue, that thou wouldſt be diſappointed, if thou hadſt reaſon to think, that ſhe was ſubdued by *her own* conſent, or any the leaſt yielding in her will. And ſo is ſhe beholden to me in ſome meaſure, that, at the expence of *my* honour, ſhe may ſo juſtly form a plea, which will entirely ſalve *hers*.

And now is the whoſe ſecret out.

Thou wilt ſay I am a horrid fellow!—As the Lady does, that I am the *unchained Beelzebub*, and a *plotting villain*: And as this is what you both ſaid beforehand, and nothing worſe *can* be ſaid, I deſire, if thou wouldſt not have me quite ſerious with thee, and that I ſhould think thou meaneſt more by thy tilting hint, than I am willing to believe thou doſt, that thou wilt forbear

thy invectives: For is not the thing done?—Can it be helped?—And muſt I not now try to make the beſt of it?—And the rather do I enjoin thee this, and inviolable ſecrecy; becauſe I begin to think, that my puniſhment will be greater than the fault, were it to be only from my own reflection.

LETTER XXXVI.

Mr. Lovelace, *To* John Belford, *Eſq.*

Friday, June 16.

I AM ſorry to hear of thy misfortune; but hope thou wilt not long lie by it. Thy ſervant tells me, what narrow eſcape thou hadſt with thy neck, I wiſh it may not be ominous: But I think thou ſeemeſt not to be in ſo enterpriſing a way as formerly; and yet, merry or ſad, thou ſeeſt a Rake's neck is always in danger, if not from the hangman, from his own horſe. But 'tis a vicious toad, it ſeems; and I think thou ſhouldſt never venture upon his back again; for 'tis a plaguy thing for rider and horſe both to be vicious.

The fellow tells me, thou deſireſt me to continue to write to thee in order to *divert* thy chagrin on thy forced confinement: But how can I think it in my *power* to divert, when my ſubject is not pleaſing to myſe f?

Cæſar never knew what it was to be *hipped*, I will call i', till he came to be what Pompey was; that is to ſay, till he arrived at the height of his ambition: Nor did thy Lovelace know what it was to be gloomy, till he had completed his wiſhes upon the moſt charming creature in the world.

And yet why ſay I *completed?* when the *will*, the *conſent*, is wanting—And I have ſtill views before me of obtaining that?

Yet I could almoſt join with thee in the wiſh, which thou ſendeſt me up by thy ſervant, unfriendly as it is,

that

that I had had thy misfortune before Monday night laſt: For here, the poor Lady has run into a contrary extreme to that I told thee of in my laſt: For now is ſhe as much too lively, as before ſhe was too ſtupid; and 'bating that ſhe has pretty frequent lucid intervals, would be deemed raving mad, and I ſhould be obliged to confine her.

I am moſt confoundedly diſturbed about it: For I begin to fear that her intellects are irreparably hurt.

Who the devil could have expected ſuch ſtrange effects from a cauſe ſo common and ſo ſlight?

But theſe high-ſouled and high-ſenſed girls, who had ſet up for ſhining lights and examples to the reſt of the Sex, are with ſuch difficulty brought down to the common ſtandard, that a wiſe man, who prefers his peace of mind to his glory, in ſubduing one of that exalted claſs, would have nothing to ſay to them.

I do all in my power to quiet her ſpirits, when I force myſelf into her preſence.

I go on, begging pardon one minute; and vowing truth and honour another.

I would at firſt have perſuaded her, and offered to call witneſſes to the truth of it, that we were actually married. Tho' the Licence was in her hands, I thought the aſſertion might go down in her diſorder; and charming conſequences I hoped would follow. But this would not do.—

I therefore gave up that hope: And now I declare to her, that it is my reſolution to marry her, the moment her Uncle Harlowe informs me, that he will grace the ceremony with his preſence.

But ſhe believes nothing I ſay; nor (whether in her ſenſes, or not) bears me with patience in her ſight.

I pity her with all my ſoul; and I curſe myſelf, when ſhe is in her wailing fits, and when I apprehend, that intellects, ſo charming, are for ever damped.

But more I curſe theſe women, who put me upon ſuch an expedient! Lord! Lord! what a hand have I made of it!—*And all for what?*

Laſt night, for the firſt time ſince Monday laſt, ſhe got to her pen and ink: But ſhe purſues her writing with ſuch eagerneſs and hurry, as ſhew too evidently her diſcompoſure.

I hope, however, that this employment will help to calm her ſpirits.

* * * * * *

Just now Dorcas tells me, that what ſhe writes ſhe tears, and throws the paper in fragments under the table, either as not knowing what ſhe does, or diſliking it: Then gets up, wrings her hands, weeps, and ſhifts her ſeat all round the room: Then returns to her table, ſits down, and writes again.

* * * * * *

One odd Letter, as I may call it, Dorcas has this moment given me from her—*Carry this* ſaid ſhe, *to the vileſt of men.* Dorcas, a toad, brought it, without any further direction to *me.* I ſat down intending (tho' 'tis pretty long) to give thee a copy of it: But, for my life, I cannot; 'tis ſo extravagant. And the original is too much an original to let it go out of my hands.

But ſome of the ſcraps and fragments, as either torn through, or flung aſide, I will copy, for the novelty of the thing, and to ſhew thee how her mind works now ſhe is in this whimſical way. Yet I know I am ſtill furniſhing thee with new weapons againſt myſelf. But ſpare thy comments. My own reflections render them needleſs: Dorcas thinks her Lady will aſk for them: So wiſhes to have them to lay again under her table.

By the firſt thou'lt gueſs, that I have told her, that Miſs Howe is very ill, and can't write; that ſhe may account the better for not having received the Letter deſigned for her.

PAPER

PAPER I.

(Torn in two pieces.)

My dearest Miss Howe!

O What dreadful, dreadful things have I to tell you! But yet I cannot tell you neither. But say, Are you really ill, as a vile, vile creature informs me you are?

But he never yet told me truth, and I hope has not in this: And yet, if it were not true, surely I should have heard from you before now!—But what have I to do to upbraid?—You may well be tired of me!—And if you are, I can forgive you; for I am tired of myself: And all my own relations were tired of me long before you were.

How good you have always been to me, mine own dear Anna Howe!—But how I ramble!

I sat down to say a great deal—My heart was full—I did not know what to say first—And thought, and grief, and confusion, and (O my poor head) I cannot tell what—And thought, and grief and confusion, came crouding so thick upon me; *one* would be first, *another* would be first, *all* would be first; so I can write nothing at all.—Only that, whatever they have done to me, I cannot tell; but I am no longer what I was in any one thing—In any one thing did I say? Yes, but I am; for I am still, and I ever will be,

Your true——

Plague on it! I can write no more of this eloquent nonsense myself; which rather shews a raised, than a quenched, imagination: But Dorcas shall transcribe the others in separate papers, as written by the whimsical Charmer: And some time hence when all is over, and I can better bear to read them, I may ask thee for a sight of them. Preserve them therefore;

for

for we often look back with pleaſure even upon the heavieſt griefs, when the cauſe of them is removed.

PAPER. II.

(Scratch'd thro', and thrown under the Table.)

—AND can you, my dear honoured Papa, reſolve for ever to reprobate your poor child?—But I am ſure you would not, if you knew what ſhe has ſuffered ſince her unhappy—And will nobody plead for your poor ſuffering girl?—No one good body?—Why then, deareſt Sir, let it be an act of your own innate goodneſs, which I have ſo much experienced, and ſo much abuſed. I don't preſume to think you ſhould receive me—No, indeed—My name is—I don't know what my name is!—I never dare to wiſh to come into your family again!—But your heavy curſe, my Papa,—Yes, I *will* call you Papa, and help yourſelf as you can—for you are my own dear Papa, whether you will or not—And tho' I am an unworthy child—yet I *am* your child—

PAPER III.

A Lady took a great fancy to a young Lion, or a Bear, I forget which—But a Bear, or a Tyger, I believe, it was. It was made her a preſent of, when a whelp. She fed it with her own hand: She nurſed up the wicked cub with great tenderneſs; and would play with it without fear or apprehenſion of danger: And it was obedient to all her commands: And its tameneſs, as ſhe uſed to boaſt, increaſed with its growth; ſo that, like a Lap-dog, it would follow her all over the houſe. But mind what followed: At laſt, ſome how, neglecting to ſatisfy its hungry maw, or having otherwiſe diſobliged it on ſome occaſion, it reſumed its nature; and on a ſudden fell upon her, and tore her in pieces.—And who was moſt to blame, I pray? The Brute, or the Lady?

The

The Lady, ſurely!—For what *ſhe* did, was *out* of nature, *out* of character, at leaſt: What *it* did, was *in* its own nature.

PAPER IV.

HOW art thou now humbled in the duſt, thou proud Clariſſa Harlowe! Thou that never ſtepped out of thy Father's houſe, but to be admired! Who wert wont to turn thine eye, ſparkling with healthful life, and ſelf-aſſurance, to different objects at once as thou paſſedſt, as if (for ſo thy penetrating Siſter uſed to ſay) to plume thyſelf upon the expected applauſes of all that beheld thee! Thou that uſedſt to go to reſt ſatisfied with the adulations paid thee in the paſt day, and couldſt put off every-thing but thy Vanity!—

PAPER V.

REjoice not now, my Bella, my Siſter, my friend; but pity the humbled creature, whoſe fooliſh heart you uſed to ſay you beheld thro' the thin veil of humility which covered it.

It muſt have been ſo! My fall had not elſe been permitted—

You penetrated my proud heart with the jealouſy of an Elder Siſter's ſearching eye.

You knew me better than I knew myſelf.

Hence your upbraidings and your chidings, when I began to totter.

But forgive now thoſe vain triumphs of my heart.

I thought, poor proud wretch that I was, that what you ſaid was owing to your envy.

I thought I could acquit my intention of any ſuch vanity.

I was too ſecure in the knowledge I thought I had of my own heart.

My ſuppoſed advantages became a ſnare to me.

And what now is the end of all?—

PAPER VI.

WHAT now is become of the prospects of a happy life, which once I thought opening before me?—Who now shall assist in the solemn preparations? Who now shall provide the nuptial ornaments, which soften and divert the apprehensions of the fearful virgin? No court now to be paid to my smiles! No encouraging compliments to inspire thee with hope of laying a mind not unworthy of thee under obligation! No elevation now for conscious merit, and applauded purity, to look down from on a prostrate adorer, and an admiring world, and up to pleased and rejoicing parents and relations!

PAPER VII.

THOU pernicious Caterpillar, that preyest upon the fair leaf of Virgin Fame, and poisonest those leaves which thou canst not devour!

Thou fell Blight, thou Eastern Blast, thou overspreading Mildew, that destroyest the early promises of the shining year! that mockest the laborious toil, and blastest the joyful hopes, of the painful Husbandman!

Thou fretting Moth, that corruptest the fairest garment!

Thou eating Canker-worm, that preyest upon the opening Bud, and turnest the damask Rose into livid yellowness!

If, as Religion teaches us, God will judge us, in a great measure, by our benevolent or evil actions to one another—O wretch! bethink thee, in time bethink thee, how great must be thy condemnation!

PAPER VIII.

AT first, I saw something in your Air and Person that displeased me not. Your Birth and Fortunes were no small advantages to you.—You acted not

not ignobly by my paſſionate Brother. Every-body ſaid you were brave: Every body ſaid you were generous: A *brave* man, I thought, could not be a *baſe* man: A *generous* man, could not, I believed, be *ungenerous*, where he acknowledged *obligation*. Thus prepoſſeſſed, all the reſt that my ſoul loved and wiſhed for in your Reformation, I hoped!—I knew not, but by report, any flagrant inſtances of your vileneſs. You ſeemed frank, as well as generous: Franknefs and Generoſity ever attracted me: Whoever kept up thoſe appearances, I judged of their hearts by my own; and whatever qualities I *wiſhed* to find in them, I was *ready* to find; and *when* found, I believed them to be natives of the ſoil.

My Fortunes, my Rank, my Character, I thought a further ſecurity. I was in none of thoſe reſpects unworthy of being the Niece of Lord M. and of his two noble Siſters.—Your vows, your imprecations—But, Oh! you have barbarouſly and baſely conſpired againſt that Honour, which you ought to have protected: And now you have made me—What is it of vile that you have *not* made me?—

Yet, God knows my heart, I had no culpable inclinations!—I honoured Virtue!—I hated Vice!—But I knew not, that you were Vice itſelf!

PAPER IX.

HAD the happineſs of any the pooreſt Outcaſt in the world, whom I had never ſeen, never known, never before heard of, lain as much in *my* power, as my happineſs did in *yours*, my benevolent heart would have made me fly to the ſuccour of ſuch a poor diſtreſſed—With what pleaſure would I have raiſed the dejected head, and comforted the deſponding heart!—But who now ſhall pity the poor wretch, who has encreaſed, inſtead of diminiſhed, the number of the miſerable!

PAPER X.

LEAD me, where my own thoughts themſelves may loſe me;
Where I may doſe out what I've left of Life,
Forget myſelf, and that day's guilt?——
Cruel Remembrance!——how ſhall I appeaſe thee?

——Oh! you have done an act
That blots the face and bluſh of moſteſty;
Takes off the roſe
From the fair forehead of an innocent Love,
And makes a bliſter there!

Then down I laid my head,
Down on cold earth, and for a while was dead;
And my freed Soul to a ſtrange ſomewhere fled!
Ah! ſottiſh Soul! ſaid I,
When back to its cage again I ſaw it fly;
Fool! to reſume her broken chain,
And row the galley here again!
Fool! to that Body to return,
Where it condemn'd and deſtin'd is to *mourn!*

O my Miſs Howe! if thou haſt friendſhip help me,
And ſpeak the words of peace to my divided Soul,
That wars within me,
And raiſes ev'ry ſenſe to my confuſion.
I'm tott'ring on the brink
Of peace; and thou art all the hold I've left!
Aſſiſt me — in the pangs of my affliction!

When Honour's loſt, 'tis a relief to die:
Death's but a ſure retreat from infamy.

Then farewel, Youth,
And all the joys that dwell
With Youth and Life!
And Life itſelf, farewel!

For Life can never be ſincerely bleſt.
Heav'n puniſhes the *Bad*, and proves the *Beſt*.

Death only can be dreadful to the Bad;
To innocence 'tis like a bugbear dreſs'd
To frighten children. Pull but off the maſk,
And he'll appear a friend.

I could a Tale unfold——
Would harrow up thy ſoul——

By ſwift misfortunes
How am I purſu'd!
Which on each other
Are, like waves, renew'd!

AFTER all, Belford, I have juſt ſkimmed over theſe tranſcriptions of Dorcas; and I ſee there are method

method and good ſenſe in ſome of them, wild as others of them are; and that her memory, which ſerves her ſo well for theſe poetical flights, is far from being impaired. And this gives me hope, that ſhe will ſoon recover her charming intellects—Tho' I ſhall be the ſufferer by their reſtoration, I make no doubt.

But, in the Letter ſhe wrote to me, there are yet greater extravagancies; and tho' I ſaid it was too affecting to give thee a copy of it, yet, after I have let thee ſee the looſe papers incloſed, I think I may throw in a tranſcript of that. Dorcas therefore ſhall here tranſcribe it. *I* cannot. The reading of it affected me ten times more than the ſevereſt reproaches of a regular mind could do.

To Mr. LOVELACE.

I Never intended to write another line to you. I would not ſee you, if I could help it—O that I never had!

But tell me of a truth, Is Miſs Howe really and truly ill?—Very ill?—And is not her illneſs poiſon? And don't *you* know who gave it her?

What you, or Mrs. Sinclair, or ſomebody (I cannot tell who) have done to my poor head, you beſt know: But I ſhall never be what I was. My head is gone. I have wept away all my brain, I believe; for I can weep no more. Indeed I have had my full ſhare; ſo it is no matter.

But, good now, Lovelace don't ſet Mrs Sinclair upon me again. I never did her any harm. She *ſo* affrights me, when I ſee her!—Ever ſince—When was it? I cannot tell. *You* can, I ſuppoſe. She may be a good woman, as far as I know. She was the wife of a man of honour—Very likely—Tho' forced to lett lodgings for her livelihood. Poor gentlewoman! Let her know I pity her: But don't let her come near me again—Pray don't!

Yet ſhe may be a very good woman—

What

What would I ſay!—I forget what I was going to ſay.

O Lovelace, you are Satan himſelf; or he helps you out in every thing; and that's as bad!

But have you really and truly ſold yourſelf to him? And for how long? What duration is your reign to have?

Poor man! The contract *will* be out: And then what will be your fate!

O Lovelace! if you could be ſorry for yourſelf, I would be ſorry too—But when all my doors are faſt, and nothing but the key-hole open, and the key of late put into that, to be where you are, in a manner without opening any of them—O wretched, wretched Clariſſa Harlowe!

For I never will be Lovelace—let my Uncle take it as he pleaſes.

Well, but now I remember what I was going to ſay—It is for *your* good—not *mine*—For nothing can do me good now!—O thou villainous man! thou hated Lovelace!

But Mrs Sinclair may be a good woman—If you love me—But that you don't—But don't let her bluſter up with her worſe than manniſh airs to me again! O ſhe is a frightful woman! If ſhe *be* a woman! She needed not to put on that *fearful maſk* to ſcare me out of my poor wits. But don't tell her what I ſay—I have no hatred to her—It is only fright, and fooliſh fear, that's all.—She may not *be* a bad woman—But neither are all *men*, any more than all *women* alike—God forbid they ſhould be like you!

Alas! you have killed my head among you—I don't ſay who did it!—God forgive you all!—But had it not been better to have put me out of all your ways at once? You might ſafely have done it! For nobody would require me at your hands—No, not a ſoul—Except, indeed, Miſs Howe would have ſaid, when ſhe ſhould ſee you, What, Lovelace,

have you done with Clariſſa Harlowe!—And then you could have given any ſlight gay anſwer—Sent her beyond-ſea; or, She has run away from me, as ſhe did from her parents. And this would have been eaſily credited; for you know, Lovelace, ſhe that could run away from *them*, might very well run away from *you*.

But this is nothing to what I wanted to ſay. Now I have it.

I have loſt it again—This fooliſh wench comes teazing me—For what purpoſe ſhould I eat? For what end ſhould I wiſh to live?—I tell thee, Dorcas, I will neither eat nor drink. I cannot be worſe than I am.

I will do as you'd have me—Good Dorcas, look not upon me ſo fiercely—But thou can'ſt not look ſo bad as I have ſeen ſomebody look.

Mr. Lovelace, now that I remember what I took pen in hand to ſay, let me hurry off my thoughts, leſt I loſe them again—Here I am ſenſible—And yet I am hardly ſenſible neither—But I know my head is not as it ſhould be, for all that—Therefore let me propoſe one thing to you: It is for *your* good—not *mine:* And this is it:

I muſt needs be both a trouble and an expence to you. And here my Uncle Harlowe, when he knows how I am, will never wiſh any man to have me: No, not even *you*, who have been the occaſion of it—Barbarous and ungrateful!—A leſs complicated villainy coſt a Tarquin—But I forget what I would ſay again—

Then *this* is it—I never ſhall be myſelf again: I have been a very wicked creature—a vain, proud, poor creature full of ſecret pride—which I carried off under an humble guiſe, and deceived every body—My Siſter ſays ſo—And now I am puniſhed—So let me be carried out of this houſe, and out of your ſight; and let me be put into that Bedlam privately, which

once

once I ſaw: But it was a ſad ſight to me then! Little as I thought what I ſhould come to *myſelf!*—That is all I would ſay: This is all I have to wiſh for—Then I ſhall be out of all your ways; and I ſhall be taken care of; and Bread and Water without your tormentings, will be dainties: and my Straw-bed the eaſieſt I have lain in—for—I cannot tell how long!

My cloaths will ſell for what will keep me there, perhaps as long as I ſhall live. But, Lovelace, *dear* Lovelace, I will call you; for you have coſt me enough, I'm ſure?—don't let me be made a ſhew of, for my *family*'s ſake; nay, for your *own ſake*, don't do that—For when I know all I have ſuffered, which yet I do not, and no matter if I never do—I may be apt to rave againſt you by name, and tell of all your baſeneſs to a poor humbled creature, that once was as proud as any-body—But of what I can't tell—Except of mine own folly and vanity—But let that paſs—ſince I am puniſhed enough for it—

So, ſuppoſe, inſtead of Bedlam, it were a private mad-houſe, where nobody comes!—That will be better a great deal.

But, another thing, Lovelace: Don't let them uſe me cruelly when I am there—*You* have uſed me cruelly enough, you know!—Don't let *them* uſe me cruelly; for I will be very tractable; and do as any-body would have me to do—Except what you would have me do—for that I never will.—Another thing, Lovelace: Don't let this *good* woman, I was going to ſay *vile* woman; but don't tell her that—Becauſe ſhe won't let you ſend me to this happy refuge, perhaps, if ſhe were to know it—

Another thing, Lovelace: And let me have pen, and ink, and paper, allowed me—It will be all my amuſement—But they need not ſend to any-body I ſhall write to, what I write, becauſe it will but trouble them: And ſomebody may do you a miſchief,

may-

may-be—I wiſh not that any-body do any-body a miſchief upon my account.

You tell me, that Lady Betty Lawrence, and your Couſin Montague, were here to take leave of me; but that I was aſleep, and could not be waked. So you told me at firſt, I was married, you know; and that you were my huſband—Ah! Lovelace! look to what you ſay.—But let not them (for they will ſport with my miſery) let not *that* Lady Betty, let not *that* Miſs Montague, whatever the *real* ones may do; nor Mrs. Sinclair neither, nor any of her Lodgers, nor her Nieces, come to ſee me in my place—*Real* ones, I ſay; for, Lovelace, I ſhall find out all your villainies in time—Indeed I ſhall—So put me there as ſoon as you can—It is for *your* good—Then all will paſs for ravings that I can ſay, as, I doubt not, many poor creatures exclamations do paſs, tho' there may be too much truth in them for all that—And you know *I began to be mad at Hamſtead*—So you ſaid.—Ah! villainous man! what have you not to anſwer for!

* *

A LITTLE interval ſeems to be lent me. I had begun to look over what I have written. It is not fit for any one to ſee, ſo far as I have been able to re-peruſe it: But my head will not hold, I doubt, to go through it all. If therefore I have not already mentioned my earneſt deſire, let me tell you, it is *this*: That I be ſent out of this abominable houſe without delay, and locked up in ſome private Madhouſe about this town; for ſuch is ſeems there are; never more to be ſeen, or to be produced to anybody, except in your own vindication, if you ſhould be charged with the murder of my perſon; a much lighter crime, than that of my honour, which the greateſt villain on earth has robbed me of. And deny me not this my laſt requeſt, I beſeech you;

and one other, and that is, Never to let me ſee you more! This ſurely may be granted to

The miſerably abuſed
CLARISSA HARLOWE.

I WILL not bear thy heavy preachments, Belford, upon this affecting Letter. So, not a word of that ſort! The paper, thou'lt ſee, is bliſter'd with the tears even of the harden'd tranſcriber; which has made her ink run here-and-there.

Mrs. Sinclair is a true heroine, and, I think, ſhames us all. And ſhe is a *woman* too! Thou'lt ſay, The beſt things corrupted become the worſt. But this is certain, that whatever the Sex ſet their hearts upon, they make thorough work of it. And hence it is, that a miſchief which would end in ſimple robbery among men rogues, becomes murder, if a woman be in it.

I know thou wilt blame me for having had recourſe to *Art*. But do not phyſicians preſcribe opiates in acute caſes, where the violence of the diſorder would be apt to throw the patient into a fever or delirium? I aver, that my motive for this expedient was *mercy*; nor could it be any thing elſe. For a Rape, thou knoweſt, to us Rakes, is far from being an undeſirable thing. Nothing but the Law ſtands in our way, upon that account; and the opinion of what a modeſt woman will ſuffer rather than become a *viva voce* accuſer, leſſons much an honeſt fellow's apprehenſions on that ſcore. Then, if theſe *ſomnivolencies* [I hate the word *opiates* on this occaſion] have turned her head, that is an effect they frequently have upon ſome conſtitutions; and in this caſe was rather the fault of the doſe than the deſign of the giver.

But is not Wine itſelf an opiate in degree?—How many women have been taken advantage of by wine, and other ſtill more intoxicating viands?—Let me tell thee, Jack, that the *experience* of many of the *paſſive* Sex, and the *conſciences* of many more of the

active, appealed to, will teſtify that thy Lovelace is not the worſt of villains. Nor would I have *thee* put me upon clearing myſelf by compariſons.

If ſhe eſcape a ſettled delirium when my plots unravel, I think it is all I ought to be concerned about. What therefore I deſire of thee, is, That, if two conſtructions may be made of my actions, thou wilt afford me the moſt favourable. For this, not only friendſhip, but my own ingenuouſneſs, which has furniſhed thee with the knowlege of the facts againſt which thou art ſo ready to inveigh, require of thee.

* * * * * *

WILL. is juſt returned from an errand to Hamſtead; and acquaints me, that Mrs. Townſend was yeſterday at Mrs. Moore's, accompanied by three or four rough fellows; a greater number (as ſuppoſed) at a diſtance. She was ſtrangely ſurpriſed at the news that my ſpouſe and I are entirely reconciled; and that two fine Ladies, my relations, came to viſit her, and went to town with her: Where ſhe is very happy with me. *She* was ſure we were not married, ſhe ſaid, unleſs it was while we were at Hamſtead: And *they* were ſure the ceremony was not performed there. But that the Lady *is* happy and eaſy, is unqueſtionable: And a fling was thrown out by Mrs. Moore and Mrs. Bevis at *miſchief-makers*, as they knew Mrs. Townſend to be acquainted with Miſs Howe.

Now, ſince my Fair-one can neither receive, nor ſend away Letters, I am pretty eaſy as to this Mrs. Townſend and her employer. And I fancy Miſs Howe will be puzzled to know what to think of the matter, and afraid of ſending by Wilſon's conveyance; and perhaps ſuppoſe that her friend ſlights her; or has changed her mind in my favour, and is aſhamed to own it; as ſhe has not had an anſwer to what ſhe wrote; and will believe that the Ruſtic delivered her laſt Letter into her own hand.

Mean time I have a little project come into my head, of a *new* kind; juſt for amuſement-ſake, that's all: Variety has irreſiſtible charms. I cannot live without intrigue. My Charmer has no paſſions; that is to ſay, none of the paſſions that I want her to have. She engages all my reverence. I am at preſent more inclined to regret what I have done, than to proceed to new offences: And ſhall regret it till I ſee how ſhe takes it when recovered.

Shall I tell thee my project? 'Tis not a high one. —'Tis this—To get hither Mrs Moore, Miſs Rawlins, and my Widow Bevis; for they are deſirous to make a viſit to my ſpouſe, now we are ſo happy together. And, if I can order it right, Belton, Mowbray, Tourville, and I, will ſhew them a little more of the ways of this wicked town, than they at preſent know. Why ſhould they be *acquainted* with a man of my character, and not be the *better* and *wiſer* for it?—I would have every-body rail againſt Rakes with *judgment* and *knowlege*, if they *will* rail. Two of theſe women gave me a great deal of trouble: And the third, I am confident, will forgive a merry evening.

Thou wilt be curious to know, what the *perſons* of theſe women are, to whom I intend ſo much diſtinction. I think I have not heretofore mentioned anything characteriſtic of their perſons.

Mrs. *Moore* is a widow of about Thirty-eight; a little mortified by misfortunes; but thoſe are often the merrieſt folks, when warmed. She has good features ſtill; and is what they call much of a gentlewoman, and very neat in her perſon and dreſs. She has given over, I believe, all thoughts of our Sex: But when the dying embers are raked up about the half-conſumed ſtump, there will be fuel enough left, I dare ſay, to blaze out, and give a comfortable warmth to a half-ſtarved by-ſtander.

Mrs. *Bevis* is comely; that is to ſay, plump; a

lover

lover of mirth, and one whom no grief ever dwelt with, I dare ſay, for a week together; about Twenty-five years of age: Mowbray will have very little difficulty with her, I believe; for one cannot do everything one's ſelf. And yet ſometimes women of this free caſt, when it comes to the point, anſwer not the promiſes their chearful forwardneſs gives a man who has a view upon them.

Miſs *Rawlins* is an agreeable young Lady enough; but not beautiful. She has ſenſe, and would be thought *to know the world*, as it is called; but, for her knowlege, is more indebted to *Theory* than *Experience*. A mere whipt-ſyllabub knowlege this, Jack, that always fails the perſon who truſts to it, when it ſhould hold to do her ſervice. For ſuch young Ladies have ſo much dependence upon their own underſtanding and warineſs, are ſo much above the cautions that the leſs opinionative may be benefited by, that their preſumption is generally their overthrow, when attempted by a man of experience, who knows how to flatter their vanity, and to magnify their wiſdom, in order to take advantage of their folly. But, for Miſs Rawlins, if I can add *Experience* to her *Theory*, what an accompliſhed perſon will ſhe be!—And how much will ſhe be obliged to me; and not only *ſhe*, but all thoſe who may be the better for the *precepts* ſhe thinks herſelf already ſo well qualified to give! Dearly, Jack, do I love to engage with theſe *precept givers*, and *example-ſetters*.

Now, Belford, altho' there is nothing ſtriking in any of theſe characters; yet may we, at a pinch, make a good frolicky half-day with them, if, after, we have ſoftened their wax at table by encouraging viands, we can ſet our women and them into dancing: Dancing, which all women love, and all men ſhould therefore promote, for *both* their ſakes.

And thus, when Tourville ſings, Belton fiddles, Mowbray makes rough love, and I ſmooth; and thou, Jack, wilt be by that time well enough to join in the chorus; the devil's in't, if we don't mould them into what ſhape we pleaſe—our own women, by their laughing freedoms, encouraging them to break through all their cuſtomary reſerves. For Women to Women, thou knoweſt, are great darers and incentives: not one of them loving to be outdone or outdared, when their hearts are thoroughly warmed.

I know, at firſt, the difficulty will be the *accidental* abſence of my dear Mrs. Lovelace, to whom principally they will deſign their viſit: But if we can exhilarate them, they won't then wiſh to ſee her; and I can form twenty accidents and excuſes, from one hour to another, for her abſence, till each ſhall have a ſubject to take up all her thoughts.

I am really ſick at heart for a frolic, and have no doubt but this will be an agreeable one. Theſe women already think me a wild fellow; *nor do they like me the leſs for it,* as I can perceive; and I ſhall take care, that they ſhall be treated with ſo much freedom before one another's faces, that in policy they ſhall keep each other's counſel. And won't this be doing a kind thing by them? ſince it will knit an indiſſoluble band of union and friendſhip between three women who are neighbours, and at preſent have only *common* obligations to one another: For thou wanteſt not to be told, that Secrets of Love, and Secrets of this nature are generally the ſtrongeſt cement of female friendſhips.

But, after all, if my Beloved ſhould be happily reſtored to her intellects, we may have ſcenes ariſe between us, that will be ſufficiently buſy to employ all the faculties of thy friend, without looking out for new occaſions. Already, as I have often obſerved,

has

has ſhe been the means of ſaving ſcores of her Sex, yet without her own knowlege.

Saturday Night.

By Dorcas's account of her Lady's behaviour, the dear creature ſeems to be recovering. I ſhall give the earlieſt notice of this to the *worthy* Capt. Tomlinſon, that he may appriſe Uncle John of it. I muſt be properly enabled, from that quarter, to pacify her, or at leaſt, to rebate her firſt violence.

LETTER XXXVII.

Mr. LOVELACE, *To* JOHN BELFORD, *Eſq.*

Sunday Afternoon, 6 *o'Clock*, (*June* 18.)

I WENT out early this morning, and returned not till juſt now; when I was informed, that my Beloved, in my abſence, had taken it into her head to attempt to get away.

She tripped down, with a parcel tied up in a handkerchief, her hood on; and was actually in the entry, when Mrs. Sinclair ſaw her.

Pray, Madam, whipping between her and the ſtreet-door, be pleaſed to let me know whither you are going?

Who has a right to controul me? was the word.

I have, Madam, by order of your Spouſe: And, kemboing her arms, as ſhe owned, I deſire you will be pleaſed to walk up again.

She would have ſpoken; but could not: And, burſting into tears, turned back, and went up to her chamber: And Dorcas was taken to taſk for ſuffering her to be in the paſſage before ſhe was ſeen.

This ſhews, as we hoped laſt night, that ſhe is recovering her charming intellects.

Dorcas ſays, ſhe was viſible to her but once before, the whole day; and then ſeemed very ſolemn and ſedate.

I will endeavourr to ſee her. It muſt be in her own

chamber, I ſuppoſe; for ſhe will hardly meet me in the Dining-room. What advantage will the confidence of our Sex give me over the modeſty of hers, if ſhe be recovered!—*I*, the moſt confident of men: *She*, the moſt delicate of women. Sweet Soul! methinks, I have her before me: Her face averted: Speech loſt in ſighs—Abaſhed—Conſcious—What a triumphant aſpect will this give me, when I gaze in her downcaſt countenance!

* * * *
* *

This moment Dorcas tell me, ſhe believes ſhe is coming to find me out. She aſked her after me: And Dorcas left her, drying her red-ſwoln eyes at her glaſs [No deſign of moving me by tears!]; ſighing too ſenſibly for my courage. But to what purpoſe have I gone thus far, if I purſue not my principal end? Niceneſs muſt be a little abated. She knows the worſt. That ſhe cannot fly me; that ſhe muſt ſee me; and that I can look her into a ſweet confuſion; are circumſtances greatly in my favour. What can ſhe do, but rave and exclaim? I am uſed to raving and exclaiming—But, if recovered, I ſhall ſee how ſhe behaves upon this our firſt ſenſible interview after what ſhe has ſuffered.

Here ſhe comes.

LETTER XXXVIII.

Mr. Lovelace, *To* John Belford, *Eſq.*

Sunday Night.

NEVER blame me for giving way to have Art uſed with this admirable creature. All the princes of the air, or beneath it, joining with me, could never have ſubdued her while ſhe had her ſenſes.

I will not anticipate—Only to tell thee, that I am too much awakened by her to think of ſleep, were I to go to bed; and ſo ſhall have nothing to do, but to write an account of our odd converſation, while it is

ſo

ſo ſtrong upon my mind that I can think of nothing elſe.

She was dreſſed in a white damaſk night-gown, with leſs negligence than for ſome days paſt. I was ſitting with my pen in my fingers; and ſtood up when I firſt ſaw her, with great complaiſance, as if the day were ſtill her own. And ſo indeed it is.

She entered with ſuch dignity in her manner, as ſtruck me with great awe, and prepared me for the poor figure I made in the ſubſequent converſation. A poor figure indeed!—But I will do her juſtice.

She came up with quick ſteps, pretty cloſe to me; a white handkerchief in her hand; her eyes neither fierce nor mild, but very earneſt; and a fixed ſedateneſs in her whole aſpect, which ſeemed to be the effect of deep contemplation: And thus ſhe accoſted me, with an air and action that I never ſaw equall'd.

You ſee before you, Sir, the wretch, whoſe preference of you to all your Sex, you have rewarded—as it indeed *deſerved* to be rewarded. My Father's dreadful curſe has already operated upon me in the very letter of it, as to This life; and it ſeems to me too evident, that it will not be your fault, that it is not entirely completed in the loſs of my Soul, as well as of my Honour—Which you, villainous man! have robbed me of, with a baſeneſs ſo unnatural, ſo inhuman, that, it ſeems, you, even *you*, had not the heart to attempt it, till my ſenſes were made the previous ſacrifice.

Here I made an heſitating effort to ſpeak, laying down my pen: But ſhe proceeded!—Hear me out, guilty wretch!—abandoned man!—*Man* did I ſay?—Yet what name elſe can I? ſince the mortal worryings of the fierceſt beaſt would have been more natural, and infinitely more welcome, than what you have acted by me; and that with a premeditation and contrivance worthy only of that ſingle heart, which now, *baſe* as well as ungrateful as thou art, ſeems to

quake within thee.—And well may'ſt thou quake; well may'ſt thou tremble and falter, and heſitate, as thou doſt, when thou reflecteſt upon what I have ſuffered for thy ſake, and upon the returns thou haſt made me!

By my Soul, Belford, my whole frame was ſhaken: For not only her Looks, and her Action, but her Voice, ſo ſolemn, was inexpreſſibly affecting: And then my curſed guilt, and her innocence, and merit, and rank, and ſuperiority of talents, all ſtared me at that inſtant in the face ſo formidably, that my preſent account, to which ſhe unexpectly called me, ſeemed, as I then thought, to reſemble that general one, to which we are told we ſhall be ſummoned, when our Conſcience ſhall be our accuſer.

But ſhe had had time to collect all the powers of her eloquence. The whole day probably in her intellects. And then I was the more diſappointed, as I had thought I could have gazed the dear creature into confuſion—But it is plain, that the ſenſe ſhe has of her wrongs ſets this matchleſs woman *above all leſſer, all weaker* conſiderations.

My dear—My love—I—I—I never—No never—Lips trembling, limbs quaking, voice inward, heſitating, broken—Never ſurely did miſcreant look ſo *like* a miſcreant! While thus ſhe proceeded, waving her ſnowy hand, with all the graces of moving oratory.

I have no pride in the confuſion viſible in thy whole perſon. I have been all the day praying for a compoſure, if I could not eſcape from this vile houſe, that ſhould once more enable me to look up to my deſtroyer with the conſcioufneſs of an innocent ſufferer. Thou ſeeſt me, ſince my wrongs are beyond the power of *words to expreſs*, thou ſeeſt me, *calm enough* to wiſh, that thou may'ſt continue haraſſed by the workings of thy own Conſcience, till effectual repentance take hold of thee, that ſo thou may'ſt not forfeit

forfeit all title to *that* mercy which thou haſt not ſhewn to the poor creature now before thee, who had ſo well deſerved to meet with a faithful friend, where ſhe met with the worſt of enemies.

But tell me (for no doubt thou haſt *ſome* ſcheme to purſue) Tell me, ſince I am a priſoner, as I find, in the vileſt of houſes, and have not a friend to protect or ſave me, what thou intendeſt ſhall become of the remnant of a life not worth the keeping!—Tell me, if yet there are more evils reſerved for me; and whether thou haſt entered into a compact with the grand deceiver, in the perſon of his horrid agent in this houſe; and if the ruin of my Soul, that my Father's curſe may be fulfilled, is to complete the triumphs of ſo vile a confederacy?—Anſwer me!—Say, if thou haſt courage to ſpeak out to her whom thou haſt ruined, tell me what *further* I am to ſuffer from thy barbarity?

She ſtopped here; and, ſighing, turned her ſweet face from me, drying up with her handkerchief thoſe tears which ſhe endeavoured to reſtrain; and, when ſhe could not, to conceal from my ſight.

As I told thee, I had prepared myſelf for high paſſions, raving, flying, tearing, execration: Theſe tranſient violences, the workings of ſudden grief, and ſhame, and vengeance, would have ſet us upon a par with each other, and quitted ſcores. Theſe have I been accuſtomed to; and, as nothing violent is laſting, with theſe I could have wiſhed to encounter. But ſuch a majeſtic compoſure—Seeking me—whom, yet it is plain, by her attempt to get away, ſhe would have avoided ſeeking—No Lucretia-like vengeance upon herſelf in her thought—Yet ſwallowed up, her whole mind ſwallowed up, as I may ſay, by a grief ſo heavy, as, in her own words, to be beyond the power of ſpeech to expreſs—and to be able, diſcompoſed as ſhe was, to the very morning, to put ſuch a home-queſtion to me, as if ſhe had pe-

netrated my future view—How could I avoid looking like a fool, and anſwering, as before, in broken ſentences, and confuſion?

What—What-a—What has been done—I, I, I—cannot but ſay—Muſt own—Muſt confeſs—Hem—Hem——Is not right—Is not what ſhould have been—But-a—But—But—I am truly—truly—ſorry for it—Upon my ſoul I am—And—And—will do all—do every thing—Do what—What-ever is incumbent upon me—all that you—that you—that you ſhall require, to make you amends!—

O Belford! Belford! Whoſe the triumph now!—Hers, or Mine.

Amends! O thou truly deſpicable wretch!—Then lifting up her eyes—Good Heaven! Who ſhall pity the creature who could fall by ſo baſe a mind!—Yet—and then ſhe looked indignantly upon me!—Yet, I hate thee not (baſe and low-ſouled as thou art!) half ſo much as I hate myſelf, that I ſaw thee not ſooner in thy proper colours!—That I hoped either Morality, Gratitude, or Humanity, from a Libertine, who, to *be* a Libertine, muſt have got over and defied all moral ſanctions (*a*).

She then called upon her couſin Morden's name, as if he had warned her againſt a man of free principles; and walked towards the window; her handkerchief at her eyes: But, turning ſhort towards me, with an air of mingled ſcorn and majeſty—[*What, at the moment, would I have given never to have injured her!*] What amends haſt *thou* to propoſe!—What amends can ſuch a one as Thou make to a perſon of ſpirit, or common ſenſe, for the evils thou haſt ſo inhumanly made me ſuffer?

As ſoon, Madam—As ſoon—as—As ſoon as your Uncle—or—not waiting—

Thou wouldſt tell me, I ſuppoſe—I know what

(*a*) *Her couſin Morden's words to her in his Letter from Florence.* See Vol. IV. p. 33.

thou

thou wouldſt tell me—But thinkeſt thou, that *Marriage will ſatisfy for a guilt like thine?* Deſtitute as thou haſt made me both of friends and fortune, I too much deſpiſe the wretch, *who could rob himſelf of his wife's virtue*, to endure the thoughts of thee, in the light thou ſeemeſt to hope I will accept thee in!—

I heſitated an interruption: But my meaning died away upon my trembling lips. I could only pronounce the word *Marriage*—And thus ſhe proceeded:

Let me therefore know, whether I am to be controuled in the future diſpoſal of myſelf? Whether, in a Country of Liberty, as *this*, where the *Sovereign* of it muſt not be guilty of *your* wickedneſs, and where *you* neither durſt have attempted it, had I one friend or relation to look upon me; I am to be kept here a priſoner, to ſuſtain freſh injuries? Whether, in a word, you intend to hinder me from going whither my deſtiny ſhall lead me?

After a pauſe; for I was ſtill ſilent;

Can you not anſwer me this plain queſtion?—I quit all claim, all expectation, upon you—What right have you to detain me here?

I could not ſpeak. What could I ſay to ſuch a queſtion?

O wretch! wringing her uplifted hands, had I not been robbed of my ſenſes, and that in the *baſeſt* manner—You beſt know how—Had I been able to account for myſelf, and your proceedings, or to have known but how the days paſſed; a whole week ſhould not have gone over my head, as I find it has done, before I had told you, what I now tell you—*That the man who has been the villain to me you have been, ſhall never make me his wife.*—I will write to my Uncle, to lay aſide his kind intentions in my favour—All my proſpects are ſhut in—I give myſelf up for a loſt creature as to this world—Hinder me not from entering upon a life of ſevere penitence, for correſponding, after prohibition, with a wretch who has

too

too well juſtified all their warnings and inveteracy; and for throwing myſelf into the power of your vile artifices. Let me try to ſecure the only hope I have left. This is all the amends I aſk of you. I repeat, therefore, am I *now* at liberty to diſpoſe of myſelf as I pleaſe?

Now comes the fool, the miſcreant again, heſitating his broken anſwer: My deareſt Love, I am confounded, quite confounded, at the thought of what—of what has been done; and at the thought of—To whom. I ſee, I ſee, there is no withſtanding your eloquence!—Such irreſiſtible proofs of the Love of Virtue *for its own ſake*—did I never hear of, nor meet with, in all my reading. And if you can forgive a repentant villain, who thus on his knees implores your forgiveneſs [Then down I dropt, abſolutely in earneſt in all I ſaid] I vow by all that's Sacred and Juſt (and may a thunberbolt ſtrike me dead at your feet, if I am not ſincere!) that I will by Marriage before to-morrow noon, without waiting for your Uncle, or any-body, do you all the juſtice I now *can* do you. And you ſhall ever after controul and direct me as you pleaſe, till you have made me more worthy of your angelic purity, than now I am: Nor will I preſume ſo much as to touch your garment, till I have the honour to call ſo great a bleſſing lawfully mine.

O thou guileful betrayer! There is a juſt God, whom thou invokeſt: Yet the Thunderbolt deſcends not; and thou liveſt to imprecate and deceive!

My deareſt Life! riſing; for I hoped ſhe was relenting—

Hadſt thou not ſinned beyond the *poſſibility of forgiveneſs*, interrupted ſhe; and this had been the firſt time that thus thou ſolemnly promiſeſt and invokeſt the vengeance thou haſt as often defied; the deſperateneſs of my condition might have induced me to think of taking a wretched chance with a man ſo profligate.

profligate. But *after what I have ſuffered by thee*, it would be *criminal* in me to wiſh to bind my Soul in covenant to a man ſo nearly allied to perdition.

Good God!—how uncharitable!—I offer not to defend—Would to Heaven that I could recall—*So nearly allied to perdition*, Madam!—So *profligate* a man, Madam!——

O how ſhort is expreſſion of *thy* crimes, and of *my* ſufferings!—Such permeditation in thy baſeneſs!—To proſtitute the characters of perſons of honour of thy own family—And all to delude a poor creature, whom thou oughteſt—But why talk I to thee?—Be thy crimes upon thy head!—Once more I aſk thee, Am I, or am I not, at my own liberty *now?*

I offered to ſpeak in defence of the women, declaring that they really were the very perſons.——

Preſume not, interrupted ſhe, baſe as thou art, to ſay one word in thine own vindication on this head. I have been contemplating their behaviour, their converſation, their over-ready acquieſcencies to my declarations in thy diſfavour; their free, yet affectedly reſerved light manners: And now that the ſad event has opened my eyes, and I have compared facts and paſſages together, in the little interval that has been lent me, I wonder I could not diſtinguiſh the behaviour of the unmatron like jilt whom thou broughteſt to betray me, from the worthy Lady whom thou haſt the honour to call thy Aunt: And that I could not detect the ſuperficial creature, whom thou paſſedſt upon me for the virtuous Miſs Montague.

Amazing uncharitableneſs in a Lady ſo good herſelf!—That the high ſpirits thoſe Ladies were in to ſee *you*, ſhould ſubject them to ſuch cenſures!—I do moſt ſolemnly vow, Madam——

That they were, interrupting me, *verily* and *indeed* Lady Betty Lawrance, and thy couſin Montague!—O wretch! I ſee by thy ſolemn averrment [*I had not yet averred it*] what credit ought to be given to all the reſt. Had I no other proof——

Interrupting her, I beſought her patient ear. 'I 'had found myſelf, *I told her*, almoſt *avowedly* de-'ſpiſed and hated. I had no hope of gaining her 'Love, or her Confidence. The Letter ſhe had left 'behind her, on her removal to Hamſtead, ſuffici-'ently convinced me, that ſhe was entirely under 'Miſs Howe's influence, and waited but the return 'of a Letter from her to enter upon meaſures that 'would deprive me of her for ever: Miſs Howe had '*ever* been my enemy: More ſo *then*, no doubt, from 'the contents of the Letter ſhe had written to her on 'her firſt coming to Hamſtead: That I dared not to 'ſtand the event of ſuch a Letter; and was glad of 'an opportunity, by Lady Betty's and my Couſin's 'means (tho' they knew not my motive) to get her 'back to town; far, at the *time*, from *intending* the 'outrage which my deſpair, and her want of confi-'dence in me, put me ſo vilely upon'—

I would have proceeded; and particularly would have ſaid ſomething of Captain Tomlinſon and her Uncle; but ſhe would not hear me further. And indeed it was with viſible indignation, and not without ſeveral angry interruptions, that ſhe heard me ſay ſo much.

Would I dare, ſhe aſked me, to offer at a palliation of my baſeneſs? The two women, ſhe was convinced were impoſters. She knew not but Captain Tomlinſon, and Mr. Mennel, were ſo too. But, whether *they* were ſo or not, *I* was. And ſhe inſiſted upon being at her own diſpoſal for the remainder of her ſhort life—For indeed ſhe abhorred me in every light; and more particularly in that, in which I offered myſelf to her acceptance.

And, ſaying this, ſhe flung from me; leaving me abſolutely ſhocked and confounded at her part of a converſation, which ſhe began with ſuch uncommon, however ſevere compoſure, and concluded with ſo much ſincere and unaffected indignation.

And

And now Jack, I muſt addreſs one ſerious paragraph *particularly* to thee.

I have not yet touched upon Cohabitation—Her Uncle's mediation ſhe does not abſolutely diſcredit, as I had the pleaſure to find by one hint in this converſation—Yet ſhe ſuſpects my future views, and has doubt about Mennell and Tomlinſon.

I *do* ſay, if ſhe come *fairly* at her *lights*, at her *clues*, or what ſhall I call them? her penetration is *wonderful*.

But if ſhe do *not* come at them fairly, *then* is her incredulity, *then* is her antipathy to me evidently accounted for.

I will ſpeak out—Thou couldſt not, ſurely, play me booty, Jack?—Surely thou couldſt not let thy weak pity for *her* lead thee to an unpardonable breach of truſt to thy *friend*, who has been ſo unreſerved in his communications to thee?

I cannot believe thee capable of ſuch a baſeneſs. Satisfy me, however, upon this head. I muſt make a curſed figure in her eye, vowing and proteſting, as I ſhall not ſcruple occaſionally to vow and proteſt, if all the time ſhe has had unqueſtionable informations of my perfidy. I know thou as little feareſt me, as I do thee, in any point of manhood; and wilt ſcorn to deny it, if thou *haſt* done it, when thus home-preſſed.

And here I have a good mind to ſtop, and write no farther, till I have thy anſwer.

And ſo I will.

Monday Morn. paſt three.

LETTER XXXIX.

Mr. LOVELACE, *To* JOHN BELFORD, *Eſq.*

Monday Morn. 5 *o'clock* (*June* 19.)

I *Muſt* write on. Nothing elſe can divert me: And I think thou canſt not have been a dog to me.

I would

I would fain have closed my eyes: But sleep flies me. Well says *Horace*, as translated by *Cowley*;

The halcyon Sleep *will never build his nest*
In any stormy breast.
'Tis not enough that he does find
Clouds *and* Darkness *in the mind:*
Darkness *but half his work will do.*
'Tis not enough: he must find Quiet *too.*

Now indeed do I from my heart wish, that I had never known this Lady. But who would have thought there had been such a woman in the world? Of all the Sex I have hitherto known, or heard, or read of, it was *once subdued, and always subdued.* The *first* struggle was generally the *last*; or, at least, the subsequent struggles were so much fainter and fainter, that a man would rather have them than be without them. But how know I yet——

* * * * * *

It is now near Six—The Sun for two hours past has been illuminating every thing about me: For that impartial orb shines upon Mother Sinclair's house as well as upon any other: But nothing within me can it illuminate.

At day-dawn I looked thro' the key-hole of my Beloved's door. She had declared she would not put off her cloaths any more in this house. There I beheld her in a sweet slumber, which I hope will prove refreshing to her disturbed senses; sitting in her elbow-chair, her apron over her head; her head supported by one sweet hand, the other hand hanging down upon her side, in a sleepy lifelessness; half of one pretty foot only visible.

See the difference in our cases! thought I: She, the charming injured, can sweetly sleep, while the varlet injurer cannot close his eyes; and has been trying to no purpose the whole night to divert his melancholy, and to fly from himself!

As every vice generally brings on its own punishment, even in *this* life; if any-thing were to tempt me to doubt of *future* punishment, it would be, that there can hardly be a greater than that which I at this instant experience in my own remorse.

I hope it will go off.—If not, well will the dear creature be avenged; for I shall be the most miserable of men.

Six o'clock.

JUST now Dorcas tells me, that her Lady is preparing openly, and without disguise to be gone. Very probable. The humour she flew away from me in last night, has given me expectation of such an enterprize.

Now, Jack, to be thus hated, and despised!—And if I *have* sinned beyond forgiveness——

* * * *
* * *

BUT she has sent me a message by Dorcas, that she will meet me in the dining room; and desires [Odd enough] that the wench may be present at the conversation that shall pass between us. This message gives me hope.

Nine o'clock.

CONFOUNDED Art, Cunning Villainy!—By my Soul, she had like to have slipt thro' my fingers! She meant nothing by her message but to get Dorcas out of the way, and a clear coast. Is a fansied distress sufficient to justify this Lady for dispensing with her principles? Does she not shew me that she can wilfully deceive, as well as I?

Had she been in the fore-house, and no passage to go thro' to get at the street door, she had certainly been gone. But her haste betrayed her: For Sally Martin happening to be in the fore-parlour, and hearing a swifter motion than usual, and a rustling of silks, as if from somebody in a hurry, looked out; and seeing who it was, stept between her and the door, and set her back against it.

You

You muſt not go, Madam. Indeed you muſt not.

By what right?—And how dare you?—And ſuch like imperious airs the dear creature gave herſelf.—While Sally called out for her Aunt; and half a dozen voices joined inſtantly in the cry, for me to haſten down, to haſten down in a moment.

I was gravely inſtructing Dorcas above ſtairs, and wondering what would be the ſubject of the converſation to which the wench was to be a witneſs, when theſe outcries reached my ears. And down I flew.—And there was the charming creature, the ſweet deceiver, panting for breath, her back againſt the partition, a parcel in her hand [Women make no excurſions without their parcels] Sally, Polly (but Polly obligingly pleaded for her) the Mother, Mabell, and Peter (the footman of the houſe) about her; all, however, keeping their diſtance; the Mother, and Sally between her and the door—In her ſoft rage the dear Soul repeating, I *will* go—Nobody has a right—I *will* go—If you kill me, women, I won't go up again!

As ſoon as ſhe ſaw me, ſhe ſtept a pace or two towards me; Mr. Lovelace, I *will* go! ſaid ſhe—Do you authorize theſe women—What right have they, or *you* either, to ſtop me?

Is this, my dear, preparative to the converſation you led me to expect in the Dining-room? And do you think I can part with you thus?—Do yo think I will.

And am I, Sir, to be thus beſet?—Surrounded thus?—What have theſe women to do with me?

I deſired them to leave us, all but Dorcas, who was down as ſoon as I. I then thought it right to aſſume an air of reſolution, having found my tameneſs ſo greatly triumphed over. And now, my dear, ſaid I (urging her reluctant feet) be pleaſed to walk into the fore parlour. Here, ſince you will not go up ſtairs; here we may *hold our parley*; and Dorcas *be witneſs*

witneſs to it.—And now, Madam, ſeating her, and ſticking my hands in my ſides your, pleaſure!

Inſolent Villain! ſaid the furious Lady. And riſing, ran to the window, and threw up the Saſh [She knew not, I ſuppoſe, that there were iron rails before the windows]. And, when ſhe found ſhe could not get out into the ſtreet, claſping her uplifted hands together, having dropt her parcel—For the Love of God, good honeſt man!—For the Love of God, miſtreſs—[to two paſſers by] a poor, a poor creature, ſaid ſhe, ruined!——

I claſped her in my arms, people beginning to gather about the window: And then ſhe cried out, Murder! Help! help!—And carried her up to the Dining-room, in ſpite of her little plotting heart (as I may now call it) altho' ſhe violently ſtruggled, catching hold of the baniſters here and there, as ſhe could. I would have ſeated her there; but ſhe ſunk down half-motionleſs, pale as aſhes. And a violent burſt of tears happily relieved her.

Dorcas wept over her. The wench was actually moved for her!

Violent hyſterics ſucceeded. I left her to Mabell, Dorcas, and Polly; the latter the moſt ſupportable to her of the Siſterhood

This attempt, ſo reſolutely made, alarmed me not a little.

Mrs. Sinclair and her Nymphs, are much more concerned; becauſe of the reputation of their houſe as they call it, having received ſome inſults (broken windows threatened) to make them produce the young creature who cried out.

While the mobbiſh inquiſitors were in the height of their office, the women came running up to me, to know what they ſhould do; a Conſtable being actually fetched.

Get the Conſtable into the parlour, ſaid I, with three or four of the forwardeſt of the mob, and pro-

duce

duce one of the Nymphs, onion-eyed, in a moment, with diſordered head-dreſs and handkerchief, and let her own herſelf the perſon: The occaſion, a female ſkirmiſh; but ſatisfied with the juſtice done her. Then give a dram or two to each fellow, and all will be well.

Eleven o'clock.

ALL done, as I adviſed; and all *is* well.

Mrs. Sinclair wiſhes ſhe had never ſeen the face of ſo ſkittiſh a Lady; and ſhe and Sally are extremely preſſing with me, to leave the perverſe beauty to their *breaking*, as they call it, for four or five days. But I curſed them into ſilence; only ordering double precaution for the future.

Polly, tho' ſhe conſoled the dear perverſe one all ſhe could, when *with her*, inſiſts upon it *to me*, that nothing but terror will procure me tolerable uſage.

Dorcas was challenged by the women upon her tears. She owned them real. Said, She was aſhamed of herſelf; but could not help it. So ſincere, ſo *unyie!ding* a grief, in ſo *ſweet* a Lady!—.

The women laughed at her; But I bid her make no apologies for her tears, nor mind their laughing. I was glad to ſee them *ſo ready*. Good uſe might be made of ſuch ſtrangers. In ſhort, I would have her indulge them often, and try if it were not poſſible to gain her Lady's confidence by her concern for her.

She ſaid, That her Lady did take kind notice of them to her; and was glad to ſee ſuch tokens of humanity in her.

Well then, ſaid I, *your* part, whether any-thing come of it or not, is to be *tender-hearted*. It can do no harm, if no good. But take care you are not *too ſuddenly*, or too *officiouſly* compaſſionate.

So Dorcas will be a humane good ſort of creature, I believe, very quickly with her Lady. And as it becomes women to be ſo, and as my Beloved is willing to think highly of her own Sex; it will the more readily paſs with her.

I thought to have had one trial (having gone ſo far) for *Cohabitation*. But what hope can there be of ſucceeding?—She is invincible!—*Againſt all my notions, againſt all my conceptions* (thinking of her as a woman, and in the very bloom of her charms) *ſhe is abſolutely invincible*. My whole view at the preſent, is to do her legal juſtice, if I can but once more get her out of her altitudes.

The *Conſent* of ſuch a woman muſt make her ever new, ever charming. But aſtoniſhing! Can the want of a Church Ceremony make ſuch a difference!

She *owes* me her conſent; for hitherto I have had nothing to boaſt of. All, of my ſide, has been *deep remorſe, anguiſh of mind*, and *Love increaſed* rather *than abated*.

How her proud Rejection ſtings me!—And yet I hope ſtill to get her to liſten to my Stories of the Family-reconciliation, and of her Uncle and Capt. Tomlinſon—And as ſhe has given me a pretence to detain her againſt her will, ſhe *muſt* ſee me whether in temper or not.—She cannot help it. And if Love will not do, Terror, as the women adviſe, muſt be tried.

A nice part, after all, has my Beloved to act. If ſhe forgive me eaſily, I reſume perhaps my projects:—If ſhe carry her rejection into violence, that violence may make me deſperate, and occaſion freſh violence. She ought, ſince ſhe thinks ſhe has found the women out, to conſider *where ſhe is*.

I am confoundedly out of conceit with myſelf. If I give up my contrivances, my joy in ſtratagem, and plot, and invention, I ſhall be but a common man: Such another dull heavy creature as thyſelf. Yet what does even my ſucceſs in my machinations bring me, but regret, diſgrace, repentance? But I am overmatched, egregiouſly overmatched, by this woman. What to do with her, or without her, I know not.

LET-

LETTER XL.

Mr. LOVELACE, *To* JOHN BELFORD, *Esq.*

I Have this moment intelligence from Simon Parsons, one of Lord M's stewards, that his Lordship is very ill. Simon, who is my obsequious servant, in virtue of my presumptive heirship, gives me a hint in his Letter, that my presence at M. Hall, will not be amiss. So, I must accelerate, whatever be the course I shall be allowed or compelled to take.

No bad prospects for this charming creature, if the old Peer would be so kind as to surrender; and many a summons has this gout given him. A good 8000*l.* a year, and perhaps the Title Reversionary, or a still higher, would help me up with her.

Proudly as this Lady pretends to be above all pride, grandeur will have its charms with her; for grandeur always makes a man's face shine in a woman's eye. I have a pretty good, because a clear, Estate, as it is: But what a noble variety of mischief will 8000*l.* a year, enable a man to do?

Perhaps thou'lt say, I do *already* all that comes into my head: But that's a mistake—Not one half, I will assure thee. And even *good folks*, as I have heard, love to have the *power* of doing mischief, whether they make *use of it*, or *not*. The late Queen Anne, who was a very good woman, was always fond of *prerogative*. And her Ministers in her name, in more instances than one, made a *ministerial* use of this her foible.

* * * * *

BUT now, at last, am I to be admitted to the presence of my angry Fair-one: After three denials, nevertheless; and a *peremptory* from me, by Dorcas, that I must see her in her chamber, if I cannot see her in the dining-room.

Dorcas, however, tells me that she says, If she were at her own liberty, she would never see me more;

more; and that she had been asking after the characters and conditions of the neighbours. I suppose, now she has found her voice, to call out for help from them, if there were any to hear her.

She will have it now, it seems, that I had the wickedness from the very beginning, to contrive for her ruin, a house so convenient for dreadful mischief.

Dorcas begs of her to be pacified—Entreats her to see me with patience—Tells her that I am one of the most derermined of men, as she has heard say. That gentleness may do with me; but that nothing else will, she believes. And what, as her Ladyship (as she always stiles her) is *married*, if I *had* broken my oath, or *intended* to break it!—

She hinted plain enough to the honest wench, that she was *not* married. But Dorcas would not understand her.

This shews, that she is resolved to keep no measures. And now is to be a trial of skill, whether she shall or not.

Dorcas has hinted to her my Lord's illness, as a piece of intelligence that dropt in conversation from me.

But here I stop. My Beloved, pursuant to my peremptory message, is just gone up into the dining-room.

LETTER XLI.

Mr. LOVELACE, *To* JOHN BELFORD, *Esq.*

Monday Afternoon.

PITY me, Jack, for pity's sake; since, if thou dost not, nobody else will: And yet never was there a man of my genius and lively temper that wanted it more. We are apt to attribute to the Devil every thing that happens to us, which we would not *have* happen: But here, being (as perhaps thou'lt say) the Devil myself, my plagues arise from an Angel. I suppose all mankind is to be plagued by its *Contrary*.

She began with me like a true woman [*She* in the fault, *I* to be blamed] the moment I entered the dining-room: Not the leaſt apology, not the leaſt excuſe, for the uproar ſhe had made, and the trouble ſhe had given me.

I come, ſaid ſhe, into thy deteſted preſence, becauſe I cannot help it. But why am I to be impriſoned here? Altho' to no purpoſe, I cannot help——

Deareſt Madam, interrupted I, give not way to ſo much violence. You muſt know, that your detention is entirely owing to the deſire I have to make you all the amends that is in my power to make you. And This, as well for *your* ſake as *my own*.—Surely there is ſtill *one* way left to repair the wrongs you have ſuffered—

Canſt thou blot out the paſt week! Several weeks paſt, I ſhould ſay; ever ſince I have been with thee? Canſt thou call back time?—If thou canſt——

Surely, Madam, again interrupting her, if I may be permitted to call you *legally* mine, I might have but anticip——

Wretch, that thou art! Say not another word upon this ſubject. When thou vowedſt, when thou promiſedſt at Hamſtead, I had begun to think that I muſt be thine. If I had conſented, at the requeſt of thoſe I thought thy relations, this would have been a principal inducement, That I could then have brought thee, what was *moſt* wanted, an unſullied honour in dowry, to a wretch deſtitute of all honour; and could have met the gratulations of a family to which thy life has been one continued diſgrace, with a conſciouſneſs of *deſerving* their gratulations. But thinkeſt thou, that I will give a Harlot niece to thy honourable Uncle, and to thy *real* Aunts; and a Couſin to thy Couſins from a Brothel? For ſuch, in my opinion, is this deteſted houſe!—Then, lifting up her claſped hands, 'Great and good God of Heaven, 'ſaid ſhe, give me patience to ſupport myſelf under 'the weight of thoſe afflictions, which Thou, for

« wise and good ends, tho' at present impenetrable
« by me, hast permitted !'

Then, turning towards me, who knew neither what to say *to* her, nor *for* myself, I renounce thee for ever, Lovelace !—Abhorred of my Soul ! for ever I renounce thee !—Seek thy fortunes whereſoever thou wilt !—Only now, that thou haſt already ruined me——

Ruined you, Madam—The world need not—I knew not what to ſay.

Ruined me in my *own* eyes ; and that is the ſame to me, as if *all the world* knew it—Hinder me not from going whither my myſterious deſtiny ſhall lead me.

Why heſitate you, Sir ? What right have you to ſtop me, as you lately did ; and to bring me up by force, my hands and arms bruiſed with your violence ? What right have you to detain me here ?

I am cut to the heart, Madam, with invectives ſo violent. I am but too ſenſible of the wrong I have done you, or I could not *bear* your reproaches. The man who perpetrates a villainy, and reſolves to go on with it, ſhews not the compunction I ſhew. Yet, if you think yourſelf in my power, I would caution you, Madam, not to make me deſperate. For you *ſhall* be mine, or my life ſhall be the forfeit ! Nor is life worth having without you !——

Be *thine !*—I be *thine !*—ſaid the paſſionate Beauty. O how lovely in her violence !

Yes, Madam, Be *mine !*—I repeat, You *ſhall* be mine !—My very crime is your glory. My Love, my Admiration of you is increaſed by what has paſſed: *And ſo it ought.* I am willing, Madam, to court your returning favour : But let me tell you, were the houſe beſet by a thouſand armed men, reſolved to take you from me, they ſhould not effect their purpoſe, while I had life.

I never, never will be yours, ſaid ſhe, claſping her hands together, and lifting up her eyes !—I never will be yours !

We may yet ſee many happy years, Madam. All your friends may be reconciled to you. The treaty for that purpoſe is in greater forwardneſs than you imagine. You know *better* than to think the *worſe* of yourſelf for ſuffering what you *could not help*. Enjoin but the terms I can make my peace with you upon, and I will inſtantly comply.

Never, never, repeated ſhe, will I be yours!

Only forgive me, my deareſt life, this *one* time!—A virtue ſo invincible! what further view can I have againſt you?—Have I attempted any further outrage?—If you will be mine, your injuries will be injuries done to myſelf. You have too well gueſſed at the unnatural Arts that have been uſed.—But can a greater teſtimony be given of your Virtue?—And now I have only to hope, that altho' I cannot make you *complete* amends, yet you will permit me to make you *all* the amends that can poſſibly be made.

Hear me out, I beſeech you, Madam; for ſhe was going to ſpeak with an aſpect unpacifiedly angry: The God, whom you ſerve, requires but repentance and amendment. Imitate *Him*, my deareſt Love, and bleſs me with the means of reforming a courſe of life, that begins to be hateful to me. *That* was *once* your favourite point. Reſume it, deareſt creature: In charity to a Soul, as well as Body, which once, as I flattered myſelf, was *more* than indifferent to you, reſume it. And let to-morrow's Sun witneſs to our eſpouſals.

I cannot judge thee, ſaid ſhe; but the God to whom thou ſo boldly referreſt, can; and aſſure thyſelf *He* will. But, if compunction has *really* taken hold of thee; if indeed thou art touched for thy ungreatful baſeneſs, and meaneſt any thing by pleading the holy Example thou recommendeſt to my imitation; in this thy pretended repentant moment, let me ſift thee thoroughly; and by thy anſwer I ſhall judge of the ſincerity of thy pretended declarations.

Tell me then, Is there any reality in the treaty thou haſt pretended to be on foot between my Uncle and Captain Tomlinſon, and thyſelf?—Say, and heſitate not, is there any truth in that Story?—But, remember, if there be *not*, and thou avoweſt that there *is*, what further condemnation attends thy averment, if it be as ſolemn as I require it to be!

This was a curſed thruſt! What could I ſay!—Surely this mercileſs Lady is reſolved to damn me, thought I, and yet accuſes me of a deſign againſt her Soul!—But was I not obliged to proceed as I had begun?

In ſhort, I ſolemnly averred, that there was!—How one crime, as the good folks ſay, brings on another!

I added, That the Captain had been in town, and would have waited on her, had ſhe not been indiſpoſed: That he went down much afflicted, as well on her account, as on that of her Uncle; tho' I had not acquainted him either with the nature of her diſorder, or the ever-to-be-regretted occaſion of it; having told him, that it was a violent fever: That he had twice ſince, by her Uncle's deſire, ſent up to enquire after her health: And that I had already diſpatched a man and horſe with a Letter, to acquaint him (and her Uncle thro' him) with her recovery; making it my earneſt requeſt, that he would renew his application to her Uncle for the favour of his preſence at the private celebration of our Nuptials; and that I expected an anſwer, if not this night, as to-morrow.

Let me aſk thee next, ſaid ſhe (Thou knoweſt the opinion I have of the women thou broughteſt to me at Hamſtead; and who have ſeduced me hither to my ruin; Let me aſk thee) If, *really* and *truly*, they were Lady Betty Lawrance and thy Couſin Montague?—What ſayeſt thou—Heſitate not—What ſayeſt thou to this queſtion?

Aſtoniſhing, my dear, that you ſhould ſuſpect them!—But, knowing your ſtrange opinion of them, what can I ſay to be believed?

And is *this* the anſwer thou returneſt me? Doſt thou *thus* evade my queſtion? But let me know, for I am trying thy ſincerity now, and ſhall judge of thy new profeſſions by thy anſwer to this Queſtion; Let me know, I repeat, whether thoſe women be *really* Lady Betty Lawrance and thy Couſin Montague?

Let me, my deareſt Love, be enabled to-morrow to call you lawfully mine, and we will ſet out the next day, if you pleaſe, to Berkſhire, to my Lord M's, where they both are at this time; and you ſhall convince yourſelf by your own eyes, and by your own ears; which you will believe ſooner than all I can ſay or ſwear.

Now, Belford, I had really ſome apprehenſion of treachery from thee; which made me ſo miſerably evade; for elſe, I could as ſafely have ſworn to the truth of this, as to that of the former: But ſhe preſſing me ſtill for a categorical anſwer, I ventured plumb; and ſwore to it [*Lovers Oaths, Jack!*] that they were really and truly Lady Betty Lawrance and my Couſin Montague.

She lifted up her hands and eyes—What can I think!—What can I think!—

You *think* me a devil, Madam; a very devil! or you could not, after you have put theſe queſtions to me, ſeem to doubt the truth of anſwers ſo ſolemnly ſworn to.

And if I do think thee ſo, have I not cauſe? Is there another man in the world (*I* hope, for the ſake of human nature, there is not) who could act by any poor friendleſs creature as thou haſt acted by *me*, whom thou haſt *made* friendleſs—And who, before I knew thee, had for a friend every one who knew me?

I told you, Madam, *before*, that Lady Betty and my Couſin were actually here, in order to take leave

of

of you, before they ſet out for Berkſhire: But the effects of my ungrateful crime (ſuch, with ſhame and remorſe, I own it to be) were the reaſon you could not ſee them. Nor could I be ſorry, that they ſhould ſee you: Since they never would have forgiven me, had they known what had paſſed—And what reaſon had I to expect your ſilence on the ſubject, had you been recovered?

It ſignifies nothing now, that the cauſe of their appearance has been anſwered in my ruin, *who* or *what* they are: But if thou haſt averred thus ſolemnly to two falſhoods, what a wretch do I ſee before me!

I thought ſhe had now reaſon to be ſatisfied; and I begged her to allow me to talk to her of to-morrow, as of the happieſt day of my life. We have the Licence, Madam—And you *muſt* excuſe me, that I cannot let you go hence till I have tried every way I can try, to obtain your forgiveneſs.

And am I then [with a kind of frantic wildneſs] to be detained a priſoner in this horrid houſe: Am I, Sir?—Take care! Take care! holding up her hand, menacing, how you make me deſperate! If I fall, tho' by my own hand, inquiſition will be made for my blood: And be not out in thy plot, Lovelace, if it ſhould be ſo—Make ſure work, I charge thee: Dig a hole deep enough to cram in and conceal this unhappy body: For, depend upon it, that ſome of thoſe who will not ſtir to protect me living, will move Heaven and Earth to avenge me dead!

A horrid dear creature!—By my Soul, ſhe made me ſhudder! She had need indeed to talk of *her* unhappineſs in falling into the hands of the only *man* in the world, who could have uſed her, as I have uſed her—She is the only *woman* in the world, who could have ſhocked and diſturbed me, as ſhe has done.—So we are upon a foot in that reſpect. And I think I have the worſt of it by much: Since very little has been my joy; very much my trouble: And *her* pu-

nishment, as she calls it, is *over*: But when *mine*, will, or what it *may be*, who can tell?

Here, only recapitulating (think, then, how I must be affected at the time) I was forced to leave off, and sing a song to myself. I aimed at a lively air; but I croaked rather than sung. And fell into the old dismal Thirtieth of January strain: I hemmed up for a sprightlier note; but it would not do: And at last I ended, like a malefactor, in a dead psalm melody.

Heigh-ho!—I gape like an unfledged kite in its nest, wanting to swallow a chicken, bobbed at its mouth by its marauding dam!—

What a devil ails me!—I can neither think nor write!—

Lie down, pen, for a moment!

LETTER XLII.

Mr. LOVELACE, *To* JOHN BELFORD, *Esq.*

THERE is certainly a good deal in the observation, *That it costs a man ten times more pains to be wicked, than it would cost him to be good.* What a confounded number of contrivances have I had recourse to, in order to carry my point with this charming creature; and, after all, how have I puzzled myself by it; and yet am near tumbling into the pit which it was the end of all my plots to shun! What a happy man had I been with such an excellence, could I have brought my mind to marry when I first prevailed upon her to quit her Father's house! But then, as I have often reflected, how had I known, that a but blossoming Beauty, who could carry on a private correspondence, and run such risques with a notorious wild fellow, was not prompted by inclination, which one day might give such a free-liver as myself, as much pain to reflect upon, as, at the time, it gave me pleasure? Thou remembrest the Host's Tale in

Arioslo.

Arioſto. And *thy* experience, as well as *mine*, can furniſh out twenty *Fiametta*'s in proof of the imbecility of the Sex.

But to proceed with my Narrative.

The dear creature reſumed the topic her heart was ſo firmly fixed upon; and inſiſted upon quitting the *odious houſe*, and that in very high terms.

I urged her to meet me the next day at the altar in either of the two churches mentioned in the Licence. And I beſought her, whatever were her reſolution, to let me debate this matter calmly with her.

If, ſhe ſaid, I would have her give what I deſired the leaſt moment's conſideration, I muſt not hinder her from being her own miſtreſs. To what purpoſe did I aſk her *conſent*, if ſhe had not a power over either her own perſon or actions?

Will you give me your Honour, Madam, if I conſent to your quitting a houſe ſo diſagreeable to you?—

My Honour, Sir! ſaid the dear creature—Alas!—And turned weeping from me with inimitable grace—As if ſhe had ſaid—Alas!—You have robbed me of my honour!

I hoped then, that her angry paſſions were ſubſiding; but I was miſtaken: For, urging her warmly for the Day; and that for the ſake of our mutual honour, and the honour of both our families; in this high-flown and high-ſouled ſtrain ſhe anſwered me:

And canſt thou, Lovelace, be ſo *mean*—as to wiſh to make a wife of the creature thou haſt inſulted, diſhonoured, and abuſed, as thou haſt me? Was it neceſſary to humble me down to the low level of thy baſeneſs, before I could be a wife meet for thee? Thou hadſt a Father, who was a man of honour: A Mother, who deſerved a better Son. Thou haſt an Uncle, who is no diſhonour to the Peerage of a kingdom, whoſe Peers are more reſpectable than the no-

bility of any other country. Thou haſt other Relations alſo, who may be *thy* boaſt, tho' thou canſt not be *theirs*—And canſt thou not imagine, that thou heareſt them calling upon thee; the Dead from their monuments; the Living from their laudable pride; not to diſhonour thy ancient and ſplendid houſe, by entering into wedlock with a creature whom thou haſt levelled with the dirt of the Street, and claſſed with the vileſt of her Sex?

I extolled her Greatneſs of Soul, and her Virtue. I execrated myſelf for my guilt: And told her, how grateful to the *Manes* of my Anceſtors, as well as to the Wiſhes of the Living, the honour I ſupplicated for would be.

But ſtill ſhe inſiſted upon being a free agent; of ſeeing herſelf in other lodgings before ſhe would give what I urged the *leaſt* conſideration. Nor would ſhe promiſe me favour even then, or to permit my viſits. How then, as I aſked her, could I comply, without reſolving to loſe her for ever?

She put her hand to her forehead often as ſhe talked; and at laſt, pleading diſorder in her head, retired; neither of us ſatisfied with the other. But *ſhe* ten times more diſſatisfied with me, than I with her.

Dorcas ſeems to be coming into favour with her—What now!—What now!—

Monday Night.

How determined is this Lady!—Again had ſhe like to have eſcaped us!—What a fixed reſentment!—She only, I find, aſſumed a little calm, in order to quiet ſuſpicion. She was got down, and actually had unbolted the Street-door, before I could get to her; alarmed as I was by Mrs. Sinclair's cookmaid, who was the only one that ſaw her fly thro' the paſſage: Yet lightning was not quicker than I.

Again I brought her back to the dining-room, with infinite reluctance on her part. And before her face,

ordered

ordered a ſervant to be placed conſtantly at the bottom of the ſtairs for the future.

She ſeemed even choaked with grief and diſappointment.

Dorcas was exceedingly aſſiduous about her; and confidently gave it as her own opinion, that her dear Lady ſhould be permitted to go to another lodging, ſince this was ſo diſagreeable to her: Were ſhe to be killed for ſaying ſo, ſhe would ſay it. And was *good* Dorcas for this afterwards.

But for ſome time the dear creature was all paſſion and violence—

I ſee, I ſee, ſaid ſhe, when I had brought her up, what I am to expect from your new profeſſions, O vileſt of men!—

Have I offered to you, my beloved creature, any thing that can juſtify this impatience after a more hopeful calm?

She wrung her hands. She diſordered her headdreſs. She tore her ruffles. She was in a perfect phrenſy.

I dreaded her returning malady: But entreaty rather exaſperating, I affected an angry air.—I bid her expect the worſt ſhe had to fear—And was menacing on, in hopes to intimidate her, when, dropping down at my feet.

'Twill be a mercy, ſaid ſhe, the higheſt act of mercy you can do, to kill me outright upon this ſpot—This happy ſpot, as I will, in my laſt moments, call it!—Then, baring, with a ſtill more frantic violence, part of her enchanting neck—Here, here, ſaid the ſoul-harrowing Beauty, let thy pointed mercy enter! And I will thank thee, and forgive three for all the dreadful paſt!—With my lateſt gaſp will I forgive and thank thee!—Or help *me* to the means, and I will myſelf put out of thy way ſo miſerable a wretch! And bleſs thee for thoſe means!

Why all this extravagant paſſion? Why all theſe

exclamations? Have I offered any new injury to you, my deareſt life? What a phrenſy is this! Am I not ready to make you all the reparation that I *can* make you? Had I not reaſon to hope—

No, no, no, no—half a dozen times, as faſt as ſhe could ſpeak.

Had I not reaſon to hope, that you were meditating upon the means of making me happy, and yourſelf not miſerable, rather than upon a flight ſo cauſeleſs and ſo precipitate?—

No, no, no, no, as before, ſhaking her head with wild impatience, as reſolved not to attend to what I ſaid.

My reſolutions are ſo honourable, if you will permit them to take effect, that I need not be ſolicitous whither you go, if you will but permit my viſits, and receive my vows.—And God is my witneſs, that I bring you not back from the door with any view to your diſhonour, but the contrary: And this moment I will ſend for a Miniſter to put an end to all your doubts and fears.

Say this, and ſay a thouſand times more, and bind every word with a ſolemn appeal to that God whom thou art accuſtomed to invoke to the truth of the vileſt falſhoods, and all will ſtill be ſhort of what thou haſt vowed and promiſed to me. And, were not my heart to abhor thee, and to riſe againſt thee, for thy *perjuries*, as it *does*, I would not, I tell thee once more, I would not, bind my Soul in covenant with ſuch a man, for a thouſand worlds!

Compoſe yourſelf, however, Madam; for *your own ſake*, compoſe yourſelf. Permit me to raiſe you up; *abhorred* as I am of your ſoul!

Nay, if I muſt not touch you; for ſhe wildly ſlapt my hands; but with ſuch a ſweet paſſionate Air, her boſom heaving and throbbing as ſhe looked up to me, that altho' I was moſt ſincerely enraged, I could with tranſport have preſſed her to mine.

If I muſt not touch you, I will not.—But depend upon it [and I aſſumed the ſterneſt air I could aſſume, to try what that would do] depend upon it, Madam, that this is not the way to avoid the evils you dread. Let me do what I will, I cannot be uſed worſe—Dorcas, begone!

She aroſe, Dorcas being about to withdraw; and wildly caught hold of her arm: O Dorcas! If thou art of mine own Sex, leave me not, I charge thee!—Then quitting Dorcas, down ſhe threw herſelf upon her knees, in the furthermoſt corner of the room, claſping a chair with her face laid upon the bottom of it!—O where can I be ſafe?—Where, where can I be ſafe, from this man of violence?—

This gave Dorcas an opportunity to confirm herſelf in her Lady's confidence: The wench threw herſelf at my feet, while I ſeemed in violent wrath; and embracing my knees, Kill me, Sir, kill me, Sir, if you pleaſe!—I muſt throw myſelf in your way, to ſave my Lady. I beg your pardon, Sir—But you muſt be ſet on!—God forgive the miſchief-makers!—But your own heart, if left to itſelf, would not permit theſe things—Spare, however, Sir! ſpare my Lady, I beſeech you!—buſtling on her knees about me, as if I were intending to approach her Lady, had I not been reſtrained by her.

This, humoured by me, Begone, devil!—Officious devil begone!—ſtartled the dear creature: who, ſnatching up haſtily her head from the chair, and as haſtily poping it down again in terror, hit her noſe, I ſuppoſe, againſt the edge of the chair; and it guſhed out with blood, running in a ſtream down her boſom; ſhe herſelf too much affrighted to heed it!

Never was mortal man in ſuch terror and agitation as I; for I inſtantly concluded, that ſhe had ſtabbed herſelf with ſome concealed inſtrument.

I ran to her in a wild agony—For Dorcas was frighted out of all her mock interpoſition——

What

What have you done!—O what have you done! —Look up to me, my deareſt life!—Sweet injured innocence, look up to me,! What have you done!— Long will I not ſurvive you!—And I was upon the point of drawing my ſword to diſpatch myſelf, when I diſcovered—[What an unmanly blockhead does this charming creature make me at her pleaſure!] that all I apprehended was but a bloody noſe, which, as far as I know (for it could not be ſtopped in a quarter of an hour) may have ſaved her head and her intellects.

But I ſee by this ſcene, that the ſweet creature is but a pretty coward at bottom; and that I can terrify her out of her virulence againſt me, whenever I put on ſternneſs and anger. But then, as a qualifier to the advantage this gives me over her, I find myſelf to be a coward too, which I had not before ſuſpected, ſince I was capable of being ſo eaſily terrified by the apprehenſions of her offering violence to herſelf.

LETTER XLIII.

Mr. LOVELACE, *To* JOHN BELFORD, *Eſq.*

BUT with all this dear creature's reſentment againſt me, I cannot, for my heart, think but ſhe will get all over, and conſent to enter the Pale with me. Were ſhe even to die to morrow, and to know ſhe ſhould, would not a woman of her ſenſe, of her punctilio, and in her ſituation, and of ſo proud a family, rather die married, than otherwiſe?—No doubt but ſhe would; altho' ſhe were to hate the man ever ſo heartily. If ſo, there is now but one man in the world whom ſhe can have—And that is *Me*.

Now I talk [*Familiar writing* is but *talking*, Jack] thus glibly of entering the Pale, thou wilt be ready to queſtion me, I know, as to my intentions on this head.

As much of my heart, as I know of it myſelf, will I tell thee.—When I am *from* her, I cannot ſtill help heſitating about Marriage; and I even frequently re-

ſolve

ſolve againſt it, and determine to preſs my favourite ſcheme for Cohabitation. But when I am *with* her, I am ready to ſay, to ſwear, and to do, whatever I think will be moſt acceptable to her: And were a Parſon at hand, I ſhould plunge at once, no doubt of it, into the State.

I have frequently thought, in *common* caſes, that it is happy for many giddy fellows [There are giddy fellows, as well as giddy girls, Jack; and perhaps *thoſe* are as often drawn in, as *theſe*] that Ceremony and Parade are neceſſary to the irrevocable Solemnity; and that there is generally time for a man to recollect himſelf in the ſpace between the heated over-night, and the cooler next morning; or I know not who could eſcape the ſweet gypſies, whoſe faſcinating powers are ſo much aided by our own raiſed imaginations.

A wife at any time, I uſed to ſay. I had ever confidence and vanity enough to think, that no woman breathing could deny her hand, when I held out mine. I am confoundedly mortified to find, that this Lady is able to hold me at bay, and to refuſe all my *honeſt* vows.

What force [Allow me a ſerious reflection, Jack: It *will* be put down! What force] have evil habits upon the human mind! When we enter upon a devious courſe, we think we ſhall have it in our power when we will to return to the right path. But it is not ſo, I plainly ſee: For, who can acknowlege with more juſtice this dear creature's merits, and his own errors, than I? Whoſe regret, at times, can be deeper than mine, for the injuries I have done her? Whoſe reſolutions to repair thoſe injuries ſtronger?—Yet how tranſitory is my penitence!—How am I hurried away—Canſt thou tell by what?—O devil of Youth, and devil of Intrigue, how do you miſlead me!—How often do we end in occaſions for the deepeſt remorſe, what we begin in wantonneſs!—

At the preſent writing, however, the turn of the

ſcale

ſcale is in behalf of Matrimony—For I deſpair of carrying with her my favourite point.

The Lady tells Dorcas, that her heart is broken; and that ſhe ſhall live but a little while. I think nothing of that, if we marry. In the firſt place, ſhe knows not what a mind unapprehenſive will do for her, in a State to which all the Sex look forward with high ſatisfaction. How often have the whole ſacred Conclave been thus deceived in their choice of a Pope; not conſidering, that the new dignity is of itſelf ſufficient to give new life! A few months heart's eaſe will give my Charmer a quite different notion of things: And I dare ſay, as I have heretofore ſaid (*a*), Once married, and I am married for life.

I will allow, that her pride, in *one* ſenſe, has ſuffered abaſement: But her triumph is the greater in every other. And while I can think that all her trials are but additions to her honour, and that I have laid the foundations of her glory in my own ſhame, can I be called cruel, if I am *not* affected with her grief as ſome men would be?

And for what ſhould her heart be broken? Her will is unviolated:—At *preſent*, however, her will is unviolated. The deſtroying of good habits, and the introducing of bad, to the corrupting of the whole heart, is the violation. That her will is not to be corrupted, that her mind is not to be debaſed, ſhe has hitherto unqueſtionably proved. And if ſhe give cauſe for further trials, and hold faſt her integrity; what *ideas* will ſhe have to dwell upon, that will be able to corrupt her morals? What *veſtigia*, what *remembrances*, but ſuch as will inſpire abhorrence of the attempter?

What nonſenſe then to ſuppoſe, that ſuch a mere *notional violation* as ſhe has ſuffered, ſhould be able to cut aſunder the ſtrings of life?

Her Religion, married, or not married, will ſet her

(*a*) See p. 270.

above

above making ſuch a trifling accident, ſuch an *involuntary* ſuffering, fatal to her.

Such conſiderations as theſe, they are, that ſupport me againſt all apprehenſion of bugbear conſequences: And I would have them have weight with thee; who art ſuch a doughty advocate for her. And yet I allow thee this; That ſhe really makes too much of it: Takes it too much to heart. To be ſure ſhe ought to have forgot it by this time, except the charming, charming conſequence happen, that ſtill I am in hopes will happen, were I to proceed no further. And, if ſhe apprehend this herſelf, then has the dear over-nice ſoul ſome reaſon for taking it ſo much to heart: And yet would not, I think, refuſe to legitimate.

O Jack! had I an imperial diadem, I ſwear to thee, that I would give it up, even to my *enemy*, to have one charming Boy by this Lady. And ſhould ſhe *eſcape me*, and no ſuch effect follow, my Revenge on her family, and, in *ſuch* a caſe, on herſelf, would be incomplete, and I ſhould reproach myſelf as long as I lived.

Were I to be ſure, that this foundation is laid [And why may I not hope it is?] I ſhould not doubt to have her ſtill (ſhould ſhe withſtand her day of grace) on my own conditions: Nor ſhould I, if it were ſo, queſtion that *revived* affection in *her*, which a woman ſeldom fails to have for the father of her firſt child, whether born in wedlock, or out of it.

And pr'ythee, Jack, ſee in this my ardent hope, a diſtinction in my favour from other Rakes; who, almoſt to a man, follow their inclinations without troubling themſelves about conſequences. In imitation, as one would think, of the ſtrutting villain of a Bird, which from feathered Lady to feathered Lady purſues his imperial pleaſures, leaving it to his ſleek paramours to hatch the genial product in holes and corners of their own finding out.

END OF VOLUME V.

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XXXVIII. *From the ſame.* A high ſcene of *her* exalted, and of *his* depreſſed behaviour. Offers to make her amends by Matrimony. She treats his offer with contempt. Afraid Belford plays him falſe.

XXXIX. *From the ſame.* Wiſhes he had never ſeen her. With all the women he had known till now, it was, *Once ſubdued, and always ſubdued.* His miſerable dejection. His remorſe. She attempts to eſcape. A mob raiſed. His quick invention to pacify it. Out of conceit with himſelf, and his contrivances.

XL. XLI. *From the ſame.* Lord M. very ill. His preſence neceſſary at M. Hall. Puts Dorcas upon ingratiating herſelf with her Lady. —He re-urges Marriage to her. She abſolutely, from the moſt noble motives, rejects him.

XLII. *Love-*

XLII. *Lovelace, To Belford.* Reflects upon himself. It costs, he says, more pains to be wicked than to be good. The Lady's solemn expostulation with him. Extols her greatness of soul. Dorcas coming into favour with her. He is alarmed by another attempt of the Lady to get off. She is in agonies at being prevented. He tries to intimidate her. Dorcas pleads for her. On the point of drawing his sword against himself. The occasion.

XLIII. *From the same.* Cannot yet persuade himself but the Lady will be his. Reasons for his opinion. Opens his heart to Belford, as to his intentions by her. Mortified that she refuses his honest vows. Her violation but notional. Her triumph greater than her sufferings. Her *will* unviolated. He is a better man, he says, than most Rakes: And why.

END OF VOL. V.

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Richardson, Samuel, 1689-1761

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